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TOTALITARIAN LANGUAGE

"The Prince of Wei," said Tzŭ Lu, "is awaiting you, Sir, to take control of his administration,—what will you undertake first, Sir?"

"The one thing needed," replied the Master, "is the correction of terms."

"Are you as wide of the mark as that, Sir?" said Tzŭ Lu. "Why this correcting?"

"How uncultivated you are, Yu!" responded the Master. "A wise man, in regard to what he does not understand, maintains an attitude of reserve. If terms be incorrect, then statements do not accord with facts; and when statements and facts do not accord, then business is not properly executed; when business is not properly executed, order and harmony do not flourish; when order and harmony do not flourish, then justice becomes arbitrary; and when justice becomes arbitrary, the people do not know how to move hand or foot. Hence whatever a wise man states he can always define, and what he so defines, he can always carry into practice; for the wise man will on no account have anything remiss in his definitions."

CONFUCIUS, *ANALECTS*

"When *I* use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

LEWIS CARROLL, *THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS*

ORWELL'S NEWSPEAK AND TOTALITARIAN LANGUAGE

ITS NAZI AND COMMUNIST ANTECEDENTS

JOHN WESLEY YOUNG

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FOR RAOUL WALLENBERG,

IF HE STILL SURVIVES

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Inasmuch as I make numerous references in this book to German, Russian, and Chinese expressions, readers may wonder about the extent of my knowledge of those languages. Truth to tell, German is the only one of them that I know well—not so great a handicap, actually, since many of the most essential sources, both Nazi and Communist, are in German. On the other hand, having only a sketchy knowledge of Russian, I have generally used English-language translations of Russian texts such as Lenin's writings, occasionally checking passages of the translation against the Russian in cases where I wished to know the precise choice and texture of terminology in the original. In the very few instances in which I thought it necessary to read an entire document in Russian, I was aided by either Gennady Shkliarevsky or Medhu Malik. As for the relatively few Chinese terms mentioned in this book, most of them may be found in articles from the *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* or in the excellent series of monographs issued since the 1960s by the Center for Chinese Studies at Berkeley. The most significant and useful of these articles and monographs are listed in the bibliography. I do not myself speak or read Chinese.

While gratefully acknowledging my debt to everyone named above, I refuse to make the orthodox claim that none of these people bears any responsibility for "my" book. I have read too much of

Orwell to fall into the trap of repeating that particular cliché. For, of course, all of them do bear responsibility, some more and some less. Without their contributions, after all, the book would certainly have turned out different and, it seems safe to suppose, much worse as well.

TOTALITARIAN LANGUAGE

INTRODUCTION

LANGUAGE AND THE CIVIL SOCIAL ORDER

Labeling *Nineteen Eighty-Four* a "degraded book," an ill-tempered Marxist critic once accused its author of holding "a deep conviction that we must cling to all existing institutions, however corrupt, since any change can only be for the worse."[1] The Marxist was wrong. George Orwell's novel is actually a savage and bitter critique of modern times, a scarring denunciation of our century and some of its corrupt practices and "existing institutions." In his satire Orwell took to their logical extreme some of the ominous tendencies and trends he observed in the political and intellectual life of the 1930s and 1940s.[2]

Consider the bold assertion of the governing Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that two and two make five. This seemingly absurd slogan, with its symbolic rejection of objective truth, had predecessors in Stalin's Russia. As Eugene Lyons reported at the time, propagandists for the Soviet industrialization and collectivization effort of the early 1930s

coined the slogans "The Five Year Plan in Four Years," "5-in-4," and "2 + 2 = 5."[3] These slogans expressed the desire of the Soviet Communist party, or at least its leader, to accelerate its drive to meet industrial and agricultural goals, but they also suggest its willingness to flout logic and to dare the impossible. A defiance of fact and logic characterizes as well the Party of Oceania.

Consider, too, the setting of Orwell's satire. The squalid atmosphere of London in 1984, with its bombed-out buildings and ceaseless shortages, recalls the physical side of London during World War II and the postwar period of Labourite rule that Arthur Koestler christened "the Reign of Virtuous Gloom."[4] Orwell recreated and intensified the physical atmosphere to show that rulers who have abolished "the remembrance of things past" can use a low standard of living to divert the attention of their people from intellectual and spiritual oppression.

Consider, finally, the geopolitics of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The book portrays the earth as a piece of real estate divided among three superpowers chronically at war with one another. Here too, without question, Orwell drew upon contemporary experience. Already half-inclined to accept James Burnham's theory that the world was congealing into three vast, invincible "managerial" systems, he expected after the Second World War that the atomic bomb, manufacturable only by the richest and most powerful nations, would speed up the proliferation of dictatorial power around the globe; and on several occasions he described the world that might emerge from beneath this lengthening shadow of totalitarianism. That world to come would mirror in many ways the world of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.[5]

In these and in numberless other aspects, major and minor, general and detailed, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* satirizes the world of 1948, the year in which Orwell completed his nightmare novel. The most important point of satirical attack, however, is language.[6] Far too many critics have failed to fathom this. Joseph Jones, for instance, has suggested that the so-called Newspeak language is a "special trick" thrown in by Orwell "for the reader's entertainment," a suggestion unworthy of comment.[7] Almost as shallow is Isaac Deutscher's assertion that Newspeak is not a satirical jab at Stalinist idiom but at the "cablese" language of Anglo-American journalists.[8] To some extent Newspeak does resemble cablese, not to mention Basic English and some of the artificial tongues touted by language reformers of Orwell's day; and undoubtedly Orwell did mean to parody these things. (See appendix A.) But an analysis of Newspeak must not stop there. Otherwise one misses the importance of what Orwell, in origi-

nating Newspeak, was saying about language and politics. Orwell believed that a perfect despotism, a logically totalitarian system, in seeking to curtail dissent and stifle the upward impulse of humanity toward liberty, would need to abolish independent thought, perhaps to abolish thought altogether. To accomplish this, it would create a language in which people could not express or even conceive heretical ideas. By controlling language, in other words, totalitarian rulers could control their subjects. In Orwell's day the work of control through words had begun in earnest among the Nazis and Communists. To expose and explain this evil, Orwell invented Newspeak. Newspeak, then, is not a gimmick but the satirical imitation of a real-world tendency.

As I have attempted to prove elsewhere, the idea for Newspeak, like so much else in Orwell's novel, evolved from his reading, rumination, and observations—set forth in earlier books, articles, and essays—on the political and intellectual currents of his age.[9] Newspeak sharpens to a satirical focus these observations by Orwell and his concern about the deterioration of language and literature, not only in totalitarian societies but among Western intellectuals infected with totalitarian habits of thought. It also reflects Orwell's belief that language and politics are closely connected and that while politics can adversely affect language, language itself, when persistently abused, can contribute to political decay. Orwell, in other words, modeled Newspeak upon his perception of contemporary political, literary, and linguistic practices. This perception was for the most part quite accurate, Orwell's treatment of the language-and-politics theme is still valid in many ways, and consequently Orwell remains an author of considerable importance for political discussion.

This study consists of four sections. In the first, which is largely explicative, I present several of the major themes of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, giving special attention to the place of Newspeak in the novel and elaborating what I call the Orwellian Model of Totalitarian Language. In Parts Two and Three—chapters 2 through 9—I offer my own analysis of totalitarian language in the light of sources that have become available since Orwell's death in 1950. Victor Klemperer, Werner Betz, Cornelia Berning, Siegfried Bork, and Hans Reich, among others, have written at length about *Sprachlenkung* or language manipulation in Nazi Germany and the German Democratic Republic; and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Roman Redlikh have demonstrated how Soviet citizens were enslaved with words in the time of Stalin. There exists, in short, a sizable body of literature that I believe corroborates Orwell's description of language under the dominion

of dictators. In Part Four—chapter 10—I conclude by addressing a series of questions raised but left unanswered in earlier chapters: Did Orwell exaggerate the extent of linguistic corruption in totalitarian societies? Are words as potent an instrument of control as he supposed? Is his characterization of totalitarian language in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* a valid one? If so, does it also apply in any way to the language of democratic governments, as some have argued? Finally, of what use is it in an age when totalitarian governments—those that have not already fallen—seem everywhere on the defensive as democratic movements gain momentum?

Such a project as this one presupposes that Orwell was a political thinker whose last and most famous novel must be treated not as literature alone but as a serious contribution to political theory. Not all commentators would agree. Quite apart from Communists like James Walsh and Howard Fast, who predictably have dismissed *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as Cold War propaganda sponsored by "Wall Street,"[10] many democratically minded critics have discounted, though often only by implication, its importance as political analysis. Almost all of these critics are British or American. Generally their interpretations of the novel center on what they see as its unrelieved pessimism. At least one critic, perhaps thinking of Coleridge's opium dreams, attributed this pessimism to the possible side effects of drugs. Another viewed it as evidence of Orwell's "final sick surrender to misanthropy." A number of psychoanalysts have sought Freudian explanations for the book and its bleakness. Anthony West anticipated them in the 1950s with his influential "hidden wound" theory, which traces the "infantile" terrors of Oceania to Orwell's childhood experiences at St. Cyprian's prep school.[11] Needless to say, those who propound such interpretations tend to underrate *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a work of political theory. To them the problem demanding diagnosis is not the infernal nature of totalitarianism and its language but the troubled psyche of a disillusioned and dying socialist.

It may well be that the sheltered position of the English-speaking peoples partly accounts for this rejection by the critics of some of the shrewdest insights ever offered into absolute government. In his essays on H. G. Wells and Arthur Koestler, Orwell remarked that the most enlightening books on totalitarianism have been written by its victims, by people who have seen it "from the inside." Having never lived and languished under a dictatorship, Orwell argued, most English writers cannot imagine, still less comprehend, the nature of life in the glare of a Stalin or a Hitler.[12] What is true of English writers is also true of some English and American critics

of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Removed by a channel or an ocean from the goose-stepping madness of continental Europe and living in the comparatively safe and sane climate of a liberal culture, they have questioned whether the Kafka-like qualities of Orwell's novel can be anything other than an unreliable parody of the facts. For probably the same reason—sheltered ignorance—certain unperceptive critics have relegated *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to the level of potboiler science fiction.

True, Orwell does seem in some ways—in his lurid portrayals of torture and confession, for instance—to carry his tale to an unreal extreme. But this is because the totalitarians themselves, makers anew of human nature, have driven relentlessly and pitilessly toward the extreme, toward the superlative of pain and hate and horror. Behind the walls of Fortress Europe, behind the iron and bamboo curtains, the surreal merges with the real, the nightmare blends into waking reality. Anyone who reads such firsthand exposés of totalitarian government as Wolfgang Leonhard's *Child of the Revolution* or Alex Weissberg's *Conspiracy of Silence*, comparing them dispassionately with *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, will detect the similarities of detail and atmosphere. These similarities help to account for the prestige of Orwell and the popularity of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* over the years in the underground circles east of the Elbe and the Bohemian Forest. Opponents of totalitarian regimes were reading the forbidden book in East Germany in 1953, in Poland in 1957, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968 on the eve of Prague Spring. A Hungarian translation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, secretly circulated among members of the Petőfi Club, is believed by some to have sparked the uprising in Budapest in 1956.[13]

During the darkest postwar years, Orwell's novel became, as it were, the Goldstein's treatise of dissident movements in Soviet-bloc countries—Goldstein being the Party maverick in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* whose manuscript on oligarchical collectivism, a sort of samizdat dissertation, purportedly explains the origin and nature of Orwell's future world. Of the East European intellectuals who survived the shock of World War II only to fall into the grip of their Soviet saviors, the Nobelist poet Czeslaw Milosz once wrote:

> A great many of them have read Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*. A few have become acquainted with Orwell's *1984*, because it is both difficult to obtain and dangerous to possess; it is known only to certain members of the Inner Party. Orwell fascinates them through his insight into details they know well,

> and through his use of Swiftian satire. Such a form of writing is forbidden by the New Faith because allegory, by nature manifold in meaning, would trespass beyond the prescriptions of socialist realism and the demands of the censor. Even those who know Orwell only by hearsay are amazed that a writer who never lived in Russia should have so keen a perception into its life. The fact that there are writers in the West who understand the functioning of the unusually constructed machine of which they themselves are a part astounds them and argues against the "stupidity" of the West.[14]

Apparently these East Europeans, to whom it was given to gaze upon totalitarianism "from the inside," discerned in Orwell's Oceania an image, however imperfect, of their own regimented and garrisoned world. Not one of them espoused a "hidden wound" or "sick man" interpretation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Nor, indeed, did those Soviet customs police—thought police, Orwell would call them—who confiscated copies of *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* at the First International Book Fair in Moscow in 1977. By their action these sentinels of socialist virtue attested the truth of Orwell's indictment. It is a truth they were understandably loath to let come uncorked in their workers' paradise.

Nineteen Eighty-Four, then, is far from being an exercise in the absurd. Allowing for literary license, the leader worship, the torture, the confessions and purges, and the doublethink that figure so saliently in its pages are a generally faithful reflection of totalitarian reality. But can the same be said of Orwell's description of language? Does it illuminate some notable features of totalitarian discourse, or is it at best a caricature? T. R. Fyvel, a friend and authority on psychological warfare who visited Orwell in the hospital shortly after *Nineteen Eighty-Four* appeared in print, recalled showing him some excerpts from the German translation of the novel published in *Der Monat*. "He was pleased to learn [from me] what was new to him, that Goebbels had systematically developed a German 'Newspeak'—he had guessed right again."[15] My research into the matter indicates that Orwell did more than merely guess right. In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* he drew a reasonably reliable and well-informed picture of the language of totalitarian politics and propaganda.

Totalitarianism, Language, and Reality

This book makes its appearance at a peculiarly interesting moment. Its subject is the language of totalitarianism, but totalitarian gov-

ernment has just now joined apartheid and patriarchy as an endangered species of political rule. One by one in rapid succession the Marxist-Leninist dictatorships of East Europe yielded to fledgling democracies led by former dissidents and bitter anti-Bolsheviks. Even the Soviet Union, whose new policy of benign neglect of "fraternal" countries was the catalyst for this revolution, has begun to examine and implement authentic democracy. Who could have foretold it all? What latter-day Tocqueville could have predicted the breakdown of bureaucratically planned economies, the victory of Solidarity in Poland, the rupturing of the Berlin Wall? These developments were as welcome in the West as they were astonishing, but they may also raise questions about the need for another book on totalitarianism. If it really does face extinction, why bother to study it?

The obvious answer to this question is that endangered species sometimes make a comeback. We would do well to remember this before prematurely trumpeting the triumph of liberalism and the end of history. Honecker and Ceausescu are gone, but Stalinists such as Deng and Castro and Kim Il Sung remain in power, bewildered and shaken, perhaps, but nonetheless determined to ride out the democratic storm. What Vaclav Havel calls "the power of the powerless" may have dethroned the powerful in most of East Europe,[16] but Ethiopia and Cuba and a handful of Asian Communist countries seem impervious to reform, their rulers bent on perpetuating the Marxist-Leninist tradition of single-party domination and police terror. With China in their column, the governments of these nations hold sway over more than one quarter of the earth's inhabitants. And who can divine the ultimate course of events in Soviet Russia, that Churchillian mystery wrapped in a riddle inside an enigma? The ghost of Stalin in that troubled land has still to be laid, and his followers, whose numbers and influence are by no means negligible, may yet make their move. It goes almost without saying that another reason to continue studying totalitarianism, whether or not it becomes extinct, is historical curiosity. Following its totalitarian cousin national socialism, Marxism-Leninism as a significant social and political force may shortly disappear from the earth, but both movements will remain interesting not only to Hollywood filmmakers but to those who wish to understand the past and avoid repeating its mistakes and tragedies.

A more serious and fundamental objection to this book will come from those who question the very concept of totalitarianism. For more than two decades political analysts have been pointing out the inadequacies of the so-called totalitarian model constructed in such works of the 1950s as Friedrich and Brzezinski's *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* and Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of*

Totalitarianism. These and similar studies portray the total state as a mass-based political system ruled by a monolithic party or a paranoid dictator, intolerant of dissent and attempting to create a "new man" through indoctrination, terror, and a systematic assault upon individuality and privacy. Proponents of the model (which is here only incompletely depicted) view totalitarianism as a uniquely twentieth-century phenomenon, a type of regime not covered by any of the categories of classical political thought. For them, "tyranny" is too mild a term to describe the governments of Stalin and Hitler, generally taken to be the archetypal totalitarian systems. Critics of the model, on the other hand, have focused on what they tend to regard as its irremediable defects.[17] Among these are the alleged similarities between totalitarian governments and certain authoritarian forerunners such as Calvin's Consistorium in Geneva or the Ch'in dynasty in China, similarities said to disprove the claim that totalitarianism is an exclusively twentieth-century occurrence. Another apparent defect of the model is its failure to account for elements of pluralism existing even within the most repressive and supposedly monolithic systems, including those of Stalin and Hitler. A third problem with the model is its tendency to overlook crucial differences between national socialism and communism. If these and other criticisms are valid and Benjamin Barber was correct in asserting that "totalitarianism" is therefore a conceptually useless term, it would seem to make a book such as this one altogether pointless. For how can we examine the language of totalitarianism if there is no such thing as totalitarianism?

Obviously I do not agree with critics of the model, at least not to the extent I think it should be junked. For all its shortcomings, it does carry a degree of explanatory power. The Nazi and Communist dictatorships are fundamentally different from traditional forms of despotism, and unlike the earlier despots, who contented themselves with merely external controls upon people, the totalitarian "terrible simplifiers" do aim at altering human nature and destroying every source and shape of resistance and every pocket of individual privacy. The evidence is too abundant to ignore. And while it is undeniably true that elements of pluralism, however stunted, manage somehow to exist in these novel dictatorships, this fact does not of itself nullify the concept of totalitarianism. Most democracies contain elements of oligarchy, but we still call them democracies and readily distinguish them from other political systems. No totalitarian state, not even Stalin's or Hitler's, has ever attained the paradigmatic perfection of a model, but that is hardly a reason for throwing out the

model. What it enables us to do is to say that a particular government or society is more or less totalitarian.[18] Applying the model as a measure, we can say, for example, that Stalin's government from about 1930 onward was more totalitarian than either Lenin's or Brezhnev's; that Brezhnev's was more totalitarian than Khrushchev's; that Pham Van Dong's Vietnam was less totalitarian than Pol Pot's Kampuchea; or that Hitler's Reich was more totalitarian by the end of July 1944 than it was at the beginning of September 1939. The model will also tell us that at no time did most of these governments even superficially resemble a pluralist democracy. And presumably it will indicate whether Gorbachev's Soviet Union is a totalitarian state or a still-evolving half-breed between democracy and totalitarianism.

It is perhaps a further point in favor of the model that the recently liberated East Europeans have been using it to describe the system by which for so many years they were deprived of freedom and independence. President Havel, for instance, a man not given to using words imprecisely, has repeatedly characterized the late Czechoslovakian Communist government as a "totalitarian system."[19] His characterization is even more apt for Romania under Ceausescu. Indeed, it is difficult to survey the wreckage of Romanian society in the aftermath of this dictator's demise without recalling Hannah Arendt's account of "the iron band of total terror" and its atomizing effects on the population of a totalitarian country.[20] As the nation struggles to create a civic culture almost out of whole cloth amid widespread suspicions and mutual recriminations among the people, we are reminded of how far totalitarian dictatorship impoverishes the public realm and subdues man's social nature by pitting neighbor against neighbor in lonely subjection to absolute authority.

The concept of totalitarianism, then, is a useful one to political science—and indispensable, it might be added, to understanding the age of death camps and final solutions. With Communist archives suddenly more accessible and former captives now speaking out uninhibitedly about the experience of repression, this seems an especially opportune moment to reexamine and reflect upon the nature of totalitarian dictatorship. And surely one of the questions scholars will want to address is this: To what extent did the great experiment in thought control succeed? Or, to pose the question differently, to what extent, if any, did the great masses in Nazi Germany and the Communist bloc come to believe in the "fictitious world" conjured by totalitarian propaganda?

To many, the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev and the failure of the Soviet economy, occasioned at least in part by the growing apathy

and cynicism of the Soviet people, demonstrate beyond doubt that the campaign to control thought, resolute and tireless though it was, did not and could not succeed. In the end, it seems, something in human nature—an innate love of truth and freedom, perhaps—defeated the controllers. That may well be the case, but it is far from self-evident. Hitler's government collapsed not because its propaganda machine failed but because Allied military might proved too much for the *Wehrmacht* and the vaunted generalship of the *Führer*. And whatever may have triggered the present reform movement in the Soviet Union, seventy years had to pass before it could come into being. Does anyone imagine that during those decades Soviet propaganda made no impression at all upon the popular consciousness? It would be more reasonable to ask how much of an impression it made and what methods were used to make it.

In her remarkable study of the origins of totalitarianism, Hannah Arendt argued that what totalitarian governments have most to fear is not their peoples' innate love of freedom but the possibility that "factual reality" will cause the fictitious world of their propaganda to fall in on itself. Facts often contradict, and thereby tend to undermine, the falsehoods and myths by which the regime justifies to the populace its continuance in power. A foreign radio broadcast, a diplomat returning from overseas, a soldier returning from the occupation of an enemy country—each may carry a virus of factual information which might infect a populace not yet immunized against reality. Thus the broadcast must be jammed, the diplomat kept under surveillance, the soldier sent to a forced-labor camp. The light of reality must never penetrate the iron curtain drawn down by the dictator. "Power means a direct confrontation with reality," Arendt observed, "and totalitarianism in power is constantly concerned with overcoming this challenge."[21]

There appear to be three strategies for dealing with factual reality. The first of these is at once the most drastic, the most logical, and the least probable: conquer the earth. For only by occupying all physical space and laying low all enemies everywhere can the regime hope to secure a monopoly on the interpretation of reality or to bring the real world into alignment with the world of its propaganda. "Only in a world completely under his control could the totalitarian ruler possibly realize all his lies and make true all his prophecies."[22] The second strategy is to cultivate what Arendt called ideological thinking, the "self-coercive force of logical deduction" from an axiomatic premise which enables people to ignore, deny, or reinterpret reality and the evidence of their own senses when these conflict with offi-

cial doctrines and assertions.[23] Unfortunately for the regime, most people most of the time seem less than fully capable of the mental acrobatics this thought process requires; ideologues seldom comprise more than a small minority of the population. In all likelihood neither the first nor the second strategy for countering reality could succeed without an assist from the third: the control of public and private discourse. According to Arendt: "The impact of factual reality, like all other human experiences, needs speech if it is to survive the moment of experience, needs talk and communication with others to remain sure of itself. Total domination succeeds to the extent that it succeeds in interrupting all channels of communication, those from person to person inside the four walls of privacy no less than the public ones which are safeguarded in democracies by freedom of speech and opinion."[24] Here, it would seem, is the most promising approach of all for totalitarianism in its quest to overcome reality and control thought. Two of its chief spokesmen, Stalin and Goebbels, both referred to language as an instrument of struggle, meaning, of course, the struggle for the mind of the masses. Plainly for the total state, which has used propaganda and the loaded word more singlemindedly than any other, language is all-important. The route to the mind lies along a highway paved with words.

But for all its importance, almost no one apart from a few German scholars has attempted a systematic study of totalitarian language; and even the Germans have generally concentrated on Nazi language while neglecting that of Communism. Curiously, the single most insightful work on the subject in English is not a scholarly tome but Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the book that branded "Newspeak" on the consciousness of the postwar generation. To be sure, some may question the wisdom of making Orwell's analysis of totalitarian language the point of departure for my own (the first full-length study in English, as far as I am aware, of both Nazi and Communist discourse). Orwell, after all, was neither a scholar nor a systematic thinker. One might argue, for instance, that he is unreliable as an interpreter of totalitarian language because he had no professional training in linguistics. Such, at least, is the burden of W. F. Bolton's *The Language of 1984*, which is far less concerned with the language of 1984 than with exposing Orwell's lack of linguistics credentials.[25] It might also be argued that Orwell had no training and little interest in philosophy and that his novel in consequence is short on the philosophical depth we should expect in any serious treatment of language.

Concerning these arguments I will make just two observations. First, although it is true that Orwell was only an amateur linguist,

he did possess a shrewd understanding of the connection between language and politics, whether totalitarian or democratic, and in his novel he made a sustained effort to illustrate the nature of that connection. This is more than can be said of most professional linguists, who for whatever reasons have largely restricted themselves to linguistics narrowly defined and neatly partitioned off from political life. (A notable exception is Michael Geis's book *The Language of Politics*.) The second observation is that although Orwell was not a philosopher any more than he was a linguist, it would be a mistake to dismiss *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a philosophically uninformed work. For not only does it raise, at least implicitly, a number of serious philosophical questions, but its treatment of language reflects a creative tension between two contrasting epistemologies, two opposing points of view about the relation of language to thought and reality. Inasmuch as these views have considerable bearing on the chapters that follow, it will be worth our while to pause here and compare them.

The first view, often associated with empiricism and nominalism, is sometimes called linguistic instrumentalism. Those who hold this view draw a sharp distinction between thought and language, arguing that the latter is merely the tool of the former. "The use of words," Thomas Hobbes explained, "is to register to ourselves, and make manifest to others the thoughts and conceptions of our minds."[26] For linguistic instrumentalists such as Hobbes and John Locke, the thought or conception gives rise to the word and not the other way around; language simply gives expression to preexisting ideas. An additional function of language, as Locke observed, is that of conveying "the knowledge of things."[27] Now the knowledge of things is at bottom empirical, something derived ultimately from sensory experience. We do not, in the instrumentalist view, initially analyze and interpret the world through language. Rather, we gain an immediate and direct acquaintance with reality—the world of space and time, of events and objects and their relations—through a wordless sort of perception guided by reason. The knowledge thus acquired from "pure" experience is then converted by the autonomous intellect into words and passed on secondhand to others. The words or symbols in which we choose to wrap our thoughts are in every case conventional, a marriage of convenience between idea and sound, and as far as possible they should point us toward phenomena of the real world. Language—philosophically exact language, at any rate—can thus be said to serve a mimetic function. It is to copy reality.[28]

Admittedly the imperfections of language sometimes frustrate our efforts to present an accurate picture of things as they are. Words,

after all, are Francis Bacon's idols of the market, creating through their conventional and arbitrary character and the imprecision with which they are often employed "a wonderful obstruction to the mind."[29] But linguistic instrumentalists see this as no reason to follow Plato's pessimistic counsel and refuse ever to commit our deeper thoughts to words (counsel that Plato himself saw fit to ignore). When words distort reality and obstruct understanding, the appropriate response is not silence but, as both Bacon and Locke recommended, the further refinement of language. For logical atomists such as the early Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein, this meant reinventing language to make it more literal and referential. For logical positivists such as Rudolf Carnap and the Vienna Circle, it meant "a radical elimination of metaphysics," a purging of empirically unverifiable or nonsensical expressions from the vocabulary of philosophy.[30] Whatever technique for refining language the linguistic instrumentalist adopts, the technique assumes the independence of thought from language, of ideas from words, and the fundamentally empirical nature of knowledge.

The other and currently more fashionable view of language is linguistic determinism, felicitously summed up in what Shelley said of Prometheus:

> *He gave man speech, and speech created thought,*
> *Which is the measure of the universe.*[31]

In this view, language is more than the mere tool of an autonomous intellect capable of operating without words or symbols. On the contrary, the word necessarily comes before the thought; with but few exceptions, such as musical composition or certain kinds of problem solving, we need language in order to think. Moreover, the word comes before our understanding of reality. For we do not approach reality directly, in a wordless frame of mind, to get a raw feel of things in themselves; our experience of reality is not, as the linguistic instrumentalists would have it, a confrontation between brute facts and reason unaided by language. Sensory experience yields no knowledge until language makes sense of the experience. As Kant understood, it is only by categorizing that we begin to notice relationships and discriminate among facts as such, to extract meaning from the world. And the act of categorizing presupposes a process of labeling. For the linguistic determinist the importance of labeling can hardly be exaggerated. To name a thing, according to Heidegger, is to give it being and set it apart from other beings; not to have a name is not

to be. In a sense one might say that the world exists for us—that we exist—precisely because we have established linguistic categories by which to order our experience. And so it is, as Heidegger concluded in his *Letter on Humanism*, that "language is the house of Being" that makes us conscious of the world and of ourselves as humanity.[32]

By naming, then, we endow the world with significance. But unfortunately there is a complication. No sooner do we begin naming things than we have thrown up a barrier between ourselves and the world. Suppose, for example, that I wish to refer to a certain horse. I recognize this object because I have a word for it, but the word "horse" is itself a universal category, a name for a class of objects and not the one particular horse I have in mind. Even if I point to the creature and say "that horse" or call it by a proper name, I am still placing words between myself on one side and the concrete object denoted by "horse" on the other. In so doing I am not experiencing a pure sensation of a horse but constructing a mental image of one, and the mental image inevitably distorts the object it supposedly represents. This putting distance between myself and objective reality would pose no problems for communication if, like the intellectuals of Lagado in *Gulliver's Travels*, I could carry about with me in a bundle all the objects I might need to refer to. Then I could be certain no one would ever mistake my reference, at least insofar as words refer to tangible things. But outside the realm of satirical fiction it is not possible for a civilized person to stuff all of his referents in a sack, and so I must rely upon symbolic expressions, with all the risk of distortion they entail, as a substitute for the objects and experiences I want to relate.

The risk of distorting reality becomes even greater when I try to refer not to reality present but reality past. Suppose, for example, that I wish to refer not to a particular living horse but to a particular dead one—to Alexander the Great's noble steed Bucephalus, let us say. This horse has no physical existence; I cannot lead him out of a stable and point to him to make my reference clear. Having never seen the horse, moreover, I can know him only from what Plutarch wrote about him, and even Plutarch based his account on someone else's; so that even if the story of Alexander and Bucephalus is authentic, I am standing at least several removes from physical reality. Nothing of Bucephalus survives but the name. Indeed, almost all of what we call history, and for that matter much of what we call current events, exists only in books or newspapers. The same can be said for much of the rest of "reality," whether we are talking about a scientific discovery or a fluctuation in stock prices. We experience only a small

part of it firsthand and depend upon the words of others for knowledge of the enormous part we do not experience. Strictly speaking, therefore, reality both past and present is for us a verbal construction.[33] Collectively the symbols and images with which we construct this reality make up what psychologists have called a *Zwischenwelt* or between-world, a conceptual sphere which mediates between the objective world and our consciousness. Since we can never get beyond language to experience unmediated reality, the between-world for all practical purposes is reality for us, or at any rate the only knowable one. Language therefore does not copy reality; it mediates or interprets and thus in effect creates reality.[34]

Carried to its subjectivist extreme, this view of language, immensely popular nowadays with avant-garde literary critics, must lead to solipsism:

> *The mind is its own place, and in it self*
> *Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.*[35]

A less radical and more tenable position is the one taken earlier in this century by the linguistic determinists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf. According to the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis, language does not so much create a separate reality as it predisposes us to perceive only certain parts of the one whole reality. Which parts we perceive will depend on what language we speak. We need language in order to think and to understand the world, and the world may well have an objective existence outside the consciousness of an observer; but because of the limitations of vocabulary and, more important, the peculiarities of grammar and syntax, speakers of different languages will see the same world from quite different perspectives. If language is the house of Being, it would seem the earth contains more than one such habitation. As Whorf explained it:

> We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages. The categories and types that we isolate from the world of phenomena we do not find there because they stare every observer in the face; on the contrary, the world is presented in a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions which has to be organized by our minds—and this means largely by the linguistic systems in our minds. We cut nature up, organize it into concepts, and ascribe significances as we do, largely because we are parties to an agreement to organize it in this way—an [implicit] agreement that holds throughout our speech community and is codified in the patterns of our language.[36]

For Whorf, the language of a people gives shape to their thought—and hence also influences their culture and their behavior—in ways of which they are not even aware. Thus, for example, the propensity of Western peoples for keeping records and marking time, and indeed the whole development of a historical consciousness in the West, may be traceable at least in part to the existence of three tenses for verbs in the family of Indo-European languages. On the other hand, the structure and vocabulary of Hopi Indian language, which contains only tenseless verbs and no term for time, may well account for the absence of a fully developed historical consciousness in Hopi culture. Furthermore, the conventional Western notions of "objectified" time and three-dimensional space—notions derived to some extent from Indo-European linguistic systems—may have led Westerners to adopt a Newtonian scientific worldview which insists on absolute simultaneity, thereby precluding for many years a physics based on the existence of a four-dimensional continuum of space and time. At any rate, however convinced an Englishman or a Frenchman or a Hopi may be that he is looking at the world as all intelligent and rational persons must look at it, the fact remains that it is not a sovereign and universal reason which guides his perception but the grammatical and semantic forms of his language. Unbeknownst to him, language makes of his consciousness "a mere puppet whose linguistic maneuverings are held in unsensed and unbreakable bonds of pattern" that permit him to acquire at best only a partial picture of reality.[37]

Now it may be that Whorf overstated his case. Language, it seems, need not imprison us in its grammatical patterns. Einstein, after all, was able to conceive the theory of relativity even though at the turn of the century the Indo-European language he spoke was inadequate to express the concepts of post-Newtonian physics. If Whorf's own theory were true, we would find it impossible to translate prose with more or less success from one language into another, and still less could Whorf himself have made the leap of intellect into the universe of Hopi discourse that enabled him to formulate the theory in the first place. But, of course, not everyone is an Einstein or a Whorf, and a "softer" version of the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis appears at least plausible. Language may not imprison us within its patterns, but the limits of a person's language and cultural experience may well make it more difficult for him or her to lay hold of certain ideas or to appreciate certain realities. How, for instance, do I teach the virtues of self-government to a Montagnard tribesman whose language has no word for democracy? How do I explain the consensual politics of

pluralist societies to someone whose language lacks a word for compromise, the closest equivalent being "surrender"? "Each tongue," wrote Wilhelm von Humboldt, the great nineteenth-century linguist, "draws a circle about the people to whom it belongs," and it is problematic how far outside this circle, if at all, a person can step.[38]

Linguistic instrumentalism and determinism turn up in the pages of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, finding a sort of dualistic expression in the views of Winston Smith, the rebellious Party underling, and O'Brien, the redoubtable Party inquisitor who breaks Winston's resistance. As with the linguistic instrumentalists, Winston's commonsense view of the world is empirical: stones are hard and water is wet, not only for Winston but for Everyman, and language properly employed will reflect such objective realities. To use it in any other way is to pervert the truth. On the other hand, O'Brien subscribes to the deterministic doctrine. Reality, he asserts, exists only in human consciousness. Language defines consciousness, and the Party controls language. Thus it also controls consciousness, which means the power to create any reality that the needs of propaganda and absolute governance dictate. For O'Brien and the Party, total domination is mostly a matter of conquering and re-creating the between-world, thereby gaining mastery over minds.

On the surface, at least, O'Brien's is the view of language that appears to prevail in the novel. Orwell, whose own view seems to have been generally inclined toward empiricism and linguistic instrumentalism,[39] was nevertheless concerned to show how language might lead men and women to deny objective reality and accept the fictitious world of totalitarian propaganda. It is as if in spite of doubts he took the Heideggers and the Whorfs at their word and spun out the full implications of their teachings. Let us assume, he said, that language determines the way we look at the world, that reality is nothing more than a construct of language, and that language is the house of Being. Let the totalitarian rulers be the architects and the builders of that house, and then let us see what sort of dwelling they build and what kind of life can be lived in it.

The result is a vivid description of language in the service of a paradigmatic totalitarian dictatorship. The purpose of this book is to find out how much that description tells us about the language of real totalitarian dictatorships. An incidental purpose is to find out, if possible, which of the two views of language more nearly approximates the truth. For all the contemporary interest in language and all the abstruse metaphysics about its influence on thinking, almost no one has tried to put linguistic determinism to the proof. The totalitar-

ian state, with its monopoly on the means of mass communication, comes as close as we are ever likely to get to a laboratory for testing the hypothesis that language determines thought. If our investigation reveals that the manipulation of language in Nazi Germany and the Communist nations has failed to control thought, has failed to foster belief in the "fictitious world" of totalitarian propaganda, it will undoubtedly weaken the case for linguistic determinism. If thought can somehow remain unfettered even when discourse is strictly regulated and systematically corrupted, then Humboldt's circle is not so confining after all.

Language and Civil Society

Nowhere in this book do I attribute to Orwell complete originality in his treatment of the language theme. Many other astute observers of civil society, from Thucydides and Plato in antiquity to Hobbes and Locke in the seventeenth century and Simone Weil in the twentieth, have traced a connection between language and politics. By more than coincidence many of these commentators lived in periods of political crisis. What they saw as they pondered the poor estate of both language and politics in their day was that each profoundly affects the other.

Most obviously, but also most fundamentally, without language there could be no politics in any acceptable sense of the term. Aristotle remarked that man by nature is a *zōn politikon*, a creature made to live in a *polis* or civil community. But if man is a polis creature, Aristotle strongly implied, it is only because he is also a *zōn logon ekhon*, a creature capable of speaking and reasoning and hence of distinguishing justice from injustice, a distinction essential to civil existence.[40] The very art of governance in its most narrowly political manifestations requires the use of *logos* or language. Command and persuasion, appeal and exhortation, rule and regulation, constitution and decree, policy and legislation must all be formulated and framed and contemplated in words. Kings cannot proclaim, democrats cannot debate, dictators cannot dictate without relying upon this most indispensable of all the tools of statecraft. "With words," Disraeli exclaimed, "we govern men!"[41] Without words, on the other hand, nothing remains to coax them into concerted action and obedience, to inspire them to deeds noble or ignoble, or to adjust the differences that agitate and trouble them, except naked force and the justice of the jungle. The possession of *logos* therefore lifts us all, ruler and

ruled alike, above brute creation and the level of instinct unaided by reason and reflection.

Indeed, upon the possession of language depend the very creation and continuation of the entire civil social order and the conditions of "commodious living" so prized by Thomas Hobbes. For civilization entails cooperation; cooperation, communication; communication, language. In large measure it is words, with all the information they encapsulate and the power they impart to solve problems and surmount obstacles, that enable us to conquer nature and cultivate the earth. We can master our environment because we can think about it, and we think about it—perceive, categorize, and process our experience of it—chiefly through words. Through words as well we develop and secure to ourselves the art and philosophy that perfect the mind and the religion that edifies the soul. In the last analysis no home or city or ship could be built, no canal dug, no crop planted, no painting painted, no civic duties taught, no order issued or understood, no culture transmitted, without using a system of signs of some kind or another. The humblest enterprise, public or private, could not proceed or even be conceived without it.

Language is therefore prerequisite to progress, which it makes possible principally by preserving the past. For men and women have made words the great repository and perpetuator of the experience of the species, "the common conduit," as Locke described it, "whereby the improvements of knowledge are conveyed from one man, and one generation to another."[42] On scrolls and parchment, on tablets of clay and stone, on phonographic records and tapes, on computer files and electronic disks, in books and periodicals, in minutes and memoranda, in library catalogues and public registers, the past and many of its discoveries and revelations live on, embodied in languages that comprise a kind of historical memory for the multitudes. Without this collective recollection, without the accumulation of wisdom and knowledge through language, humanity, if it existed at all, would be bouncing about like an amoeba from stimulus to stimulus, unremembering and mindless, incapable of betterment, unable to recall the past, interpret the present, or anticipate and plan the future, but living always without consciousness in an incomprehensible and hostile now. To put this another way, a languageless humanity would not in truth be humanity but a form of asocial subhumanity.

Unquestionably, then, there is a link between language and the political and social order. Language shapes civil society, but also civil society shapes language. Neither in fact can exist without the other, and the stability and health of the one appear to hinge on the stability

and health of its counterpart. When one is ailing, the other also ails. But the medical analogy needs explaining.

One might credibly argue that a healthy constitution—taking this last term in its broad Aristotelian sense synonymous with civil society—must repose upon a solid consensus of values. In other words, the citizens of a well-ordered society, or at least the elites in it who influence and guide public opinion, will accept the regime as legitimate and cherish political aspirations and ethical ideals and norms that are fundamentally the same. In a community or commonwealth of this nature, any serious conflicts that occur—and conflicts there must be in even the best of attainable worlds—can usually be settled or softened by pacific processes. Demands can be met or moderated, grievances redressed, tempers tamed, and problems tackled in a spirit of compromise and conciliation and without an appeal to arms or massive civil disobedience. This, at any rate, is the ideal.

Corresponding to these conditions of trust and concord and the consensus about values, there will be a tacit consensus about language. That is to say, the people of a well-ordered society will have agreed for all practical purposes that they will use certain words only in certain ways and with certain meanings assigned to them. Over the generations of their life as a nation they will have drawn up by degrees what Saussure called a "contract between concepts and sound patterns";[43] roughly, in their minds and in their mouths the same word will mark the same object or idea. This "propriety of speech," to borrow Locke's phrase—the employment of words not as if they were one's "private possession" but in accordance with "common use"[44]—greatly facilitates communication and commerce. In isolated instances, of course, individuals may disregard the language consensus. Apart from cases of carelessness, ignorance, or outright dishonesty, their impropriety of speech is the product of pathology, and it creates more hardships for the ailing individual than for society. The schizophrenic patient, for example, who answers "yes" when he means no and "no" when he means yes will have difficulty getting along with others because his words ill accord with common use; he has stepped outside the language consensus that governs his neighbors' dealings with one another. But on the whole his problem is not theirs. He may find himself straitjacketed in the mental ward of a hospital, but beyond its confines normal life flows on without him.

The unstable society of a revolutionary epoch presents quite another picture. There normality of speech has come to an end even outside the lunatic asylum. Amid the confusion and corruption that accompany turmoil and crisis in a nation or civic community, clarity

of meaning disappears, and language, like society, loses its stability and coherence. Where the norms of civility no longer hold, where war or economic upheaval has exhausted a populace and transformed its mores, where authority is regularly questioned and challenged, where faction fights faction or class fights class, where ideology has displaced religion and philosophy, and where political debate no longer revolves around secondary issues but around the legitimacy of the regime itself, the language consensus begins to dissolve. Not completely, of course, because even in the most disordered of societies the grammar and syntax of a "natural" language will change almost insensibly if at all. Moreover, the meanings of words that name concrete objects or actions, such as "plow," "train," "shoe," "throw," and "pull," will probably remain fairly fixed in spite of social flux. Where the consensus most evidently breaks down is in disagreement over the meanings of more complex verbal symbols, notably the names for abstractions like freedom, justice, virtue, legality, nation, democracy, and equality.

Heretofore many of these abstractions have figured prominently in traditional political discourse and in the harmonizing formulas and myths of the old order that long animated and awed the multitude. The abstractions, though not the out-of-date formulas that framed them, may still hold sway. In the fractured and polarized politics of the present, however, their meanings may be bitterly disputed by friends and foes of the old order. With the very doubtful exception of onomatopoeia, the matching of sound and sense in any "natural" language occurs by convention, not by nature, and now some of the conventions are violated at will by every person or party with a vision to impose or an interest to advocate. As a result not merely individuals but society itself seems suddenly afflicted with schizoid tendencies as different groups use the same words in different or even opposite ways.

For cases of this social schizophrenia we may look to the Roman republic in the period of its decline and to the modern French nation in the throes of its first great revolution. To members of the oligarchical party in the civil wars that wracked the Roman republic in the last century before Christ, the term *libertas* (liberty), an ancient and honored one in the republic, appears to have meant continued rule by the old patrician class and the preservation of its privileges. To their opponents the *populares*, on the other hand, it meant freedom from rule by the patricians.[45] Two millenia later the French revolutionaries were contesting the meaning of *égalité*. To moderate bourgeois constitutionalists, and perhaps even to Robespierre and

the sansculottes, the term signified not much more than the abolition of feudal privilege and equality of rights with the nobility. To self-appointed spokesmen for the lower classes like Gracchus Babeuf and his followers, however, "real equality" meant *justice sociale*: equality of condition and an equal right of participation in government.[46] As in the case of *libertas*, the difference in definition was so drastic as to defy reconciliation and synthesis.

Now it is true that even in the best of times and the best of societies, as well as in the worst of both, words have an elusive quality that makes it difficult to settle their significations, that under the pressure of social and political change they inevitably

> *Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place,*
> *Will not stay still*[47]

and that consequently every generation must modify their meanings in the light of its unique experience and of changed realities. In a relatively placid culture this modification of meaning amounts to little more than a gradual renegotiating of the contract between sounds and concepts, a fashioning anew, perhaps one can say a refinement, of the old language consensus. In a disordered society, by contrast, where change takes place at a feverish pace and the parties to conflict cannot concur on the content of key concepts, these may undergo a rapid and uncontrollable succession of mutations in meaning, with the predominant definition at any given moment hanging upon who holds power or pretends to speak for the public.

The etymology of *peuple* during the French Revolution is a good example. At the commencement of the Revolution *peuple* referred to the whole nation or population. In later and more radical phases it was narrowed in application to include only those elements of the population which supported the Revolution—were loyal, in other words, to whatever faction of true believers was currently in control of the government and rooting out ostensible traitors to the constitution or the republic; since control of the government changed hands many times, the precise content of *le peuple* changed as often. At various moments it meant everyone, it meant everyone but the nobility, it meant the mass of toilers, it meant the poor, it meant the Robespierrists. Words like *patriote*, *révolutionnaire*, *Jacobin*, and *sans-culotte* traveled similar semantic paths.[48] Indeed, again and again in the history of revolution, from *dēmos* among the ancient Athenians to *demokratiya* and *sotsializm* among the modern Russians, this process of unrestrained semantic metamorphosis is repeated as if it was part

of an eternal cyclical pattern of social and linguistic alteration. On such terms at such times there is no longer a more or less permanent consensus. In the absence of agreement about them, it becomes necessary for rival groups to distinguish themselves and their views from one another by contrasting democracy with "democracy" in ironic quotation marks, socialism with so-called socialism, real equality with equality, the revolutionary with the pseudorevolutionary, the radical with the ultraradical, the true patriot with the false.[49]

Many of these terms are tossed about with an obvious intent to deceive the public and manipulate mass opinion. Something very much like this deliberate corruption of terminology occurred in the revolutions that convulsed Hellas during the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides described it in his memorable account of the conflict between democratic and oligarchical factions: "Words had to change their ordinary meaning and to take that which was now given them. Reckless audacity came to be considered the courage of a loyal ally; prudent hesitation, specious cowardice; moderation was held to be a cloak for unmanliness; ability to see all sides of a question inaptness to act on any. Frantic violence became the attribute of manliness; cautious plotting, a justifiable means of self-defence. . . . Religion was in honour with neither party; but the use of fair phrases to arrive at guilty ends was in high reputation."[50] Similar passages describing similar convulsions stand out in the pages of Sallust, Hobbes (an admiring translator of Thucydides), Burke, and Orwell. All of these authors were angling at the same phenomenon: the appearance in time of turmoil of the political pathologue in whose mouth a word means its opposite. The Jacobin who calls compulsion freedom, the tyrant who calls tyranny a protectorate, the totalitarian who calls dictatorship democracy are particular variations on the same general type.

For all his acuity Thucydides in his account did not capture the whole of what happens to words in an age of revolution, nor even the half. On top of the old terminology, much of it now irrevocably altered in meaning, strange and unfamiliar formations make their appearance, new words and phrases denominating a new day, a new idea, a new reality. Although in many instances they have been coined by the leaders of revolutionary movements, by a Robespierre or a Grégoire, a Lenin or a Goebbels, these expressions, falling so lightly from the lips of the learned and the ignorant alike, sometimes give the impression of having sprung up and spread spontaneously among the masses. Many of them, such as Diggers, Girondins, and Sandinistas, name a party or faction. Others name an institution or policy of government: New Model Army, Directoire, *kolkhoz*, NEP; represent a

doctrine or deed: *Blut und Boden*, *peuplicide*, *vandalisme*; or characterize the state of society: *Entäußerung* (alienation), *Klassenkampf* (class struggle), *Rassenchaos* (racial chaos). Still others may actually be archaic forms revived for nationalistic reasons or as part of an effort to bathe a revolutionary or subversive movement in the legitimizing aura of antiquity. Such were the medieval expressions *Reich* and *Hakenkreuz* adopted by the Nazis and the preclassical Latin terms *augustus* and *tempestas* brought back to linguistic life and employed by the friends of Octavian in the first years of the Roman Empire.[51]

But more often the most fashionable revolutionary jargon has a decidedly contemporary ring, and of none is this more true than the neologisms formed by affixation. The practice of prefixing or suffixing Greek and Latin roots or their equivalents to create a new political terminology, begun on a wide scale during the French Revolution, has been emulated ever since by every major radical movement.[52] Judging from Brunot's definitive *Histoire de la Langue Française*, in the French cataclysm alone dozens of these words became common coin. In the volatility and intolerance of revolutionary politics, when the extremities have squeezed out the middle and violence has put an end to compromise, when paranoia and fear of conspiracy obsess the councils of both government and the opposition to government and a person's public virtue can be too quickly called into question, we must expect an explosion of terms like *antipopulaire*, *ultra-patriote*, *archimaratistes*, *de-révolutionner*, *terroriste*, and *babouvisme*.

In periods like these when passions run high, words and rhetoric become charged with the electricity of emotion. In vain would we seek purely rational explanations for the capacity of certain expressions to trigger the flow of adrenalin in persons enthralled by them; no dictionary definition of the words could convey to the uninitiated the emotions made to well up in a sansculotte by the sound of *fraternité* and *patrie*, in a National Socialist by *Volk* and *Vaterland*, or in a Marxist-Leninist by "proletariat" and "party." For in the context of revolution such terms, which Brunot aptly called *mots chéris*,[53] transcend rational analysis. Some of them, in fact, have acquired an import almost religious in character. For that matter, many of these positively galvanized expressions have been lifted directly out of the religious sphere and planted in the political, where naturally they take on a more secular signification. It was during the French Revolution, for example, that "propaganda" assumed its modern profane sense: where once it had signified the dissemination of Catholic dogma by the Congregatio de propaganda fide, it now came to mean militant political proselytism by revolutionary zealots.[54]

The Revolution perverted many another sacred term. Thus the Comte de Mirabeau called the Declaration of the Rights of Man an *évangile politique*—a political gospel—and the French Constitution of 1791 a *religion* for which the nation was prepared to lay down its collective life. The new revolutionary faith claimed its *évangélistes*, its *zélateurs*, its *missionnaires*, and its *sacrements* and *carêmes* (fasts) *civiques*, and in defense of it republican proselytizers were willing to launch a *croisade civique* or civic crusade. Sometimes in their enthusiasm the partisans of the Rights of Man found themselves figuratively canonizing the abstractions that ruled their souls as absolutely as any potentate divine or human; among the objects of republican piety were *sainte Liberté* and *sainte Egalité*.[55] In more recent experience both the Nazis and the Communists, like their French forerunners, have adulterated the vocabulary of religion, albeit with considerably more cynicism than Robespierre when he inaugurated the worship of *l'Etre Suprême*.

But if revolution can excite sublime sentiments, it can summon up demonic ones as well. These find expression in a plethora of terms with violently negative connotations. The French Revolution produced *tyrannie*, *aristocrate*, *réactionnaire*, and *affameur* (starver), among others, while the nineteenth-century socialist movement gave birth to *Kapitalismus* and *bourgeoisie* in their maledictory senses. Marxism-Leninism and nazism have added "monopoly capital," *revizionist*, *Bolshewismus*, *System*, and *Novemberverbrecher* (November criminals). With epithets like these, which are usually flung about with no effort or inclination to be discriminating, revolutionary orators and agitators attempt to create propaganda scapegoats, discredit and vilify their enemies, and rally popular support for their cause. Quite often they succeed beyond even their own expectation. The best evidence of that is the ensuing outbreak of logophobia—the fear of being labeled—and the desperation with which people try to avoid getting tagged as a tyrant or traitor, a *Trotskist* or a *Jude*, a *contre-révolutionnaire* or an *ennemi du peuple*. (Not that dodging an epithet does any good. It appears that aside from ignoring it, which has its perils, the best defense is either to embrace it boldly as a badge of honor or to fling it back audaciously at the opponent. In time, perhaps, everyone will be calling everyone else a fascist or a Jew, until finally, having been emptied of all meaning, the epithet loses its power to cause panic and provoke hatred.)

If all of this mutual mudslinging, emotionalism, and debasement of words has the appearance of verbal anarchy, that is because it is precisely that. And like the civil anarchy that occasions it and in turn

feeds upon it, the verbal anarchy of public discourse does not last indefinitely. Human beings, it seems, can no more abide an endless babel than an endless reign of terror; sooner or later someone or some group—Caesar Augustus, Napoleon, the Bolshevik party, the National Socialist party—emerges to make an end of anarchy, both verbal and political, by silencing opposition and suffering no voice save one—its own—to be heard henceforth.

But until that time fierce battles will rage around words and their meanings. To some extent every major revolution becomes a struggle for the power to define words and to make one's definitions stick, as well as the power to force or to foist on a nation a whole new set of political symbols for a whole new order of things—in fine, a struggle for the power to forge a new language consensus alongside a new consensus about civic values. The ability to use and to influence the use of language in this manner is proof of power procured and enemies vanquished. Little wonder, then, that in 1790 and 1791 the National Assembly of France set about suppressing much of the terminology associated with the ancien régime. The abolition of titles of nobility and deferential forms of address, the substitution of *citoyen* and *citoyenne* for *monsieur* and *madame*, was more than just an effort to elevate a new egalitarian terminology over the old aristocratic modes of expression; it was a signal that a new order had dawned and a new class had seated itself in the citadels of power. Two years later the temporarily triumphant Jacobins were just as determinedly trying to have taught in all of French territory "the language in which is written the Declaration of the Rights of Man," and accordingly plans for a dictionary containing the revolutionary neologisms, presumably with Jacobin definitions, were set afoot. These plans faltered for lack of lexical expertise among the radicals, but in 1798 another government revived the Académie français, disbanded five years earlier because of its alleged royalism, and directed it to compile and publish a dictionary supplement listing the new expressions.[56] Whether because of efforts like these or not, the language of the Rights of Man did indeed take hold and supplant the more traditional terminology of politics. Napoleon himself commandeered it and carried it afar into conquered lands. Yet in the process he perverted it by using it to further his imperial ambitions—an excellent example of the intentional contamination of words for the purposes of power politics. The Revolution had corrupted language, and now language was being used to corrupt the Revolution. Language and politics had acted and reacted upon each other with decidedly negative consequences for both.

The twentieth century, age of totalitarian revolutions and gov-

ernments, has contributed examples even more spectacular, which brings us back to George Orwell, preeminent critic of totalitarian language.

Language and the Corruption of Politics

The link between language and politics—or, more broadly, between language and the entire social order—is a recurring theme in Orwell's writing. Consider, for instance, the following passage from an early Orwell novel, *Coming Up for Air*, written in 1938–39. Its Depression-era protagonist, George Bowling, is reminiscing about his childhood and the golden civilization in which he grew up—the comparatively tranquil age before 1914, an age that Bowling likens to fishing:

> As soon as you think of fishing you think of things that don't belong to the modern world. The very idea of sitting all day under a willow tree beside a quiet pool—and being able to find a quiet pool to sit beside—belongs to the time before the war, before the radio, before aeroplanes, before Hitler. There's a kind of peacefulness even in the names of English coarse fish. Roach, rudd, dace, bleak, barbel, bream, gudgeon, pike, chub, carp, tench. They're solid kind of names. The people who made them up hadn't heard of machine-guns, they didn't live in terror of the sack or spend their time eating aspirins, going to the pictures and wondering how to keep out of the concentration camp.[57]

A "solid kind of names," one notices. Somehow the texture of words is an index to the character of society. In contrast to Bowling and the idealized era that ended at Sarajevo, the Bohemian poet Gordon Comstock, Orwellian protagonist of *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936), looks upon the London billboard ads, with their nauseating slogans and slick phrases, as a symptom of social decay under capitalism between two world wars. The visions of decadence and destruction called forth by those ads haunt him unceasingly.

They haunted Orwell also. Again and again in his essays and novels he gave voice to a conviction that the times are out of joint, that something is very much amiss in the modern world, especially in its politics, and that the present state of language is both an effect and a cause of the problem. His fullest exposition on this subject is "Politics and the English Language," first published in the British journal *Horizon* in April 1946.[58] That much-anthologized essay argues that the English language, like modern civilization, "is in a bad way": it

has grown "ugly and inaccurate."[59] Politicians, scientists, sociologists, and literary critics, to mention only the most culpable of professionals, have overloaded it with meaningless words, pretentious diction, and a good deal of imprecision and vagueness. Moreover, in their speech and writing people have fallen into the habit of letting hackneyed expressions do their thinking for them, and as a result English prose in our time "consists less and less of *words* chosen for the sake of their meaning, and more and more of *phrases* tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house."[60] The language, then, is losing its power to evoke vivid images and describe objective reality, with all the potential for muddled communication that this loss involves.

According to Orwell, the mother tongue's deterioration may be traced in part to the present state of politics. We live in an age of political orthodoxies, and orthodoxy has taken its toll on truth and on the vehicle for conveying truth, language. Listen to almost any politician on the platform. Instinctively he spouts clichés and cloudy language. Necessarily so, for the nature of contemporary politics is such that his party's line, be it Labour or Liberal, Conservative or Anarchist, Communist or Trotskyite, obliges him to defend the indefensible. "Things like the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purges and deportations, the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan, can indeed be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face, and which do not square with the professed aims of political parties."[61] Not by reasoned argument, therefore, but by lapsing into euphemism and dredging up shopworn metaphors that deaden the brain—both his own and his listener's—the orthodox politician attempts to handle unpalatable facts and to uphold injustice. His thoughts are corrupt—he admires a foreign dictator, let us say, or believes that the end justifies any means—and as a consequence his language will be corrupt as well. It will conceal and not elucidate the truth.

Thus for Orwell the corruption of politics and thought has occasioned the corruption of language; and since the relation here is one of mutual reinforcement, the corruption of language contributes in its turn to the further debasement of politics and thought. But this need not lead us into a vicious circle, Orwell believed. We can reverse the process of political and linguistic deterioration. True, we cannot all at once improve the tone of public life. The sources of its sickness lie deep in the decadence of the civil social order. But surely we can make a start at therapy by improving the quality of our prose. Away, then, with the moldy metaphors and pretentious diction! Away

with pomposity of expression! Let us pursue in their stead a plainness of style, a prose purged of every stale phrase and frazzled figure of speech. Let us choose our words and craft our sentences with utmost care, having regard always to the meaning we wish to get across and seeing to it at all times that we are the masters of our words, and not they of us. If enough of us seek the curative power of a plain style, the language as a whole will gain new life. Not only that, but its purification should help expel the silt from our cerebrums, so that we can begin thinking more clearly than before; "and to think clearly is a necessary first step towards political regeneration."[62]

Two unspoken and possibly contradictory assumptions seem to brace the argument of "Politics and the English Language."[63] The first of these is that language and thought are inextricably woven together, with language often exerting a determining influence upon our mental processes. The way we think, how well we think, and whether we are able to think at all depend in some measure upon our language or lack thereof. Mangling Marx's phrase, we might even assert that language determines consciousness, or at any rate that it is foremost in shaping our perception of the world and of reality. In Orwell this linguistic determinism is only implicit at best, and it is far outweighed by his broadly instrumentalist point of view; but some of his contemporaries, most notably the Americans Sapir and Whorf, staked their reputations as linguists on making an explicit case for it. In recent years the findings of Chomsky and Steinberg, among others, have raised questions about the rigid determinism of Sapir and Whorf's position; but few linguists would now deny the overarching influence of language upon thought.[64] The exact extent of that influence and the extent to which thought can function independently of words have remained matters of dispute; but there can be little doubt that without language, most thought that occurs must take place on a very low level indeed.

The second assumption of the "Politics" essay, one more congenial to linguistic instrumentalism, is that language is a tool we can consciously use for our own ends, be they good or evil. If, for instance, we lament the exhaustion of certain adjectives—"terrific," "startling," "unforgettable"—by hack book reviewers who use them indiscriminately to describe good and bad books alike, we can mint a new batch of modifiers to take their place and revive the art of literary criticism. Or, if we deplore the reduction of political rhetoric to cliché and cant, we might launch a campaign in the press to laugh out of existence at least the most banal and silly of the currently fash-

ionable phrases. These reforms, both of them advocated at one time or another by Orwell, though he never quite carried them into effect, would be benevolent uses of language.[65]

Used honestly, Orwell believed, language could also be therapeutic for politics, for it might help to bring about the democratic socialism he saw as the salvation of Britain. "Some day we may have a genuinely democratic government," he wrote in 1944, "a government which will want to tell people what is happening, and what must be done next, and what sacrifices are necessary, and why. It will need the mechanisms for doing so, of which the first are the right words, the right tone of voice."[66] As a medium for truth and undistorted information, language could aid in elevating the political consciousness of the common people, on whose "native decency" Orwell hinged his hope of forestalling the establishment in England of a "dictatorship of theorists, as in Russia and Germany."[67] The Spanish workers with whom he mingled in Catalonia during the civil war in Spain had shown, Orwell thought, an exceptional awareness of the issues involved in the conflict; and he was convinced that ordinary Englishmen, too, if guided by humane and liberal-minded leaders who communicated with them in "clear, popular, everyday language," could overcome their almost congenital apathy toward politics and social reform and take an abiding interest in the great public questions of the day.[68] This rhetoric of true statesmanship would be another benevolent use of language, an instance of applying to the public realm its power to produce clarity of thinking.

But one might just as easily make malevolent use of language. Consider, to take an obvious example, the totalitarian dictator who wishes to rule over his people with unrestrained power. His dominion would be more complete and his regime more secure if he relied less upon draconian decrees than upon more subtle agencies of control that left his subjects content and unresisting in their servitude, that made them, indeed, impossible though it seems, altogether unaware of repression. Better that the yoke should slip on unnoticed than that it should burn the neck and cause the brute to bristle. For this reason, as Orwell wrote in an essay on *Gulliver's Travels*, "one of the aims of totalitarianism is not merely to make sure that people will think the right thoughts, but actually to make them *less conscious*."[69] And might not language be as sure an instrument as any for effecting this aim? "A change in language can transform our appreciation of the Cosmos," Whorf argued, which may imply—although this is not what Whorf particularly had in mind—that by manipulating lan-

guage a government might skew its subjects' perception of reality in order to control their behavior.[70]

That is no hypothetical possibility. The technology of modern mass communication and the insights of psychology into human motivations and thinking have vastly increased the potential for control of the mind through verbal means, giving rise to a new science of manipulation with which totalitarian parties have been swift to arm themselves. In the period of revolution that precedes the accession of these parties to power, chaos reigns in public discourse, and promiscuity about the meanings of words opens up language to a flood of novel concepts and conflicting experiences. After their accession to power, however, the circle of a new and exceedingly narrow consensus about language, enforced and fostered by officialdom, begins to close, sealing out more and more the possibilities for alien ideas and images to invade and permeate the mind. Under pressure from totalitarian dictators and their spokesmen—from poets and playwrights as well as publicists and professional agitators—words cease to assist and facilitate rational thought, to reflect objective reality, or to translate past and present experience with reasonable accuracy and reliability. Instead, they form a language of assent and domination whose essential characteristic is its univocacy: for every politically significant word, one meaning; for every historical event, one interpretation; for every social problem, one solution; for every genre of literature, one style of writing. Although such a language can be made to bear some resemblance to rational discourse, in fact it is nothing of the kind. If anything, totalitarian language, with its ritualistic repetition of slogans and its frequent use of words as emotional stimulants rather than as carriers of information or tools of logical thinking, is intended to be an exercise in irrationality and a positive impediment to clarity of thought and expression. The extent to which it realizes this intention may determine whether the total state can wield truly total control over individuals. Out of necessity and fear a rational person may outwardly submit to dictatorial rule, but inwardly his allegiance to the state will always be much less than the 100 percent his masters demand.

Not through Huxleyan hypnopaedia, then, nor through anything so instantaneous in its operations and effects as truth serum or electrical stimulation of the brain, but rather through the slow and insidious workings of what Jürgen Habermas has called "systematically distorted communication" might a dictator best attain his end of unrestrained power.[71] It was precisely such sinister misuse of language

by government that most alarmed and intrigued Orwell, and to which increasingly in the last ten or twelve years of life he turned his attention. He hated tyrants of every type, petty and otherwise, but above all he set his face like flint against the totalitarians who, with decidedly more method and science than their predecessors the traditional autocrats, were abusing language in their pursuit of power unchecked and unchallenged. Orwell's literary career coincided with the age of total politicization, a phenomenon which fascinated as much as it frightened him; and for those who followed his political commentary in newspapers and periodicals from week to week and month to month, it must have seemed as if he was noting and charting that development, and most of all its effects on language and literature, almost as a scientist records the amount of ozone in the air or the level of contaminants in a river.

Yet in truth Orwell never approached the problem of totalitarianism and the corruption of language with the detachment of a scientist. A committed if somber social democrat, he feared that "totalitarianism, *if not fought against*, could triumph anywhere," and in its triumph it might once and for all extinguish personal freedom and an already precariously flickering hope of ever realizing the good society.[72] About this menace to civilization and to human aspirations he could not be neutral; he had to take sides and oppose it with all his strength and skill, even though the effort might end, as unhappily it did, in his premature death.

If Orwell was no neutral observer, neither were his methods of analysis always those of the painstaking scholar. The random observation, the intuitive flash, the mixing of imagination and matters of fact in a fictional format—these more than quantitative analysis or patient sifting through source material were the techniques he chose to employ. They at least had the merit of making him more readable than the sometimes overly meticulous Dr. Dryasdust. Nevertheless, in the best British tradition Orwell did bring to his work a fundamentally empirical frame of mind which preferred hard facts to highfalutin abstractions, a mass of sundry particulars to a handful of ingenious generalizations. All of his books, from *Down and Out in Paris and London* to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, carry the stamp of a commonsensical man who seldom ventured very far from the concrete details of real life, irrespective of whether the life he portrayed was the life of poverty in Paris or police repression in Spain and Russia. Orwell's was "a sort of belly-to-earth attitude," as he described it in a letter to Henry Miller in 1936,[73] which kept him in contact with reality and helped him hold his moral and political bearings at a time when

many intellectuals of his generation, avowed believers in freedom and democracy, were abasing themselves before the dictator of their choice.

In Orwell's writings, therefore, including the culminating work of his career, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, we should expect to find many well-founded observations on language and totalitarian government. Disappointment awaits us, however, if we expect to find in them also a solution to the whole oppressive problem of totalitarianism. According to Orwell, the origin of this twentieth-century political plague lies in a kind of crisis of the spirit that has smitten Western civilization. For many years, Orwell explained, socialists have assumed that man does in fact live by bread alone, that all other human distresses and evils will cease when material needs have been satisfied and hunger has been eliminated. But the socialists are wrong. Nature by and large has been subdued; there is finally enough food and wealth for everyone if only we resolve to distribute them equitably; and yet now, of all times, "political liberty is declared to be impossible and half the world is ruled by secret police forces. Exactly at the moment when superstition crumbles and a rational attitude towards the universe becomes feasible, the right to think one's own thoughts is denied as never before."[74] The reason for this regression into greater repression, Orwell thought, is that modern man no longer seriously believes in an afterlife in which good is rewarded and evil punished and hence no longer possesses a sense of absolute right and wrong; in its place is a paralyzing form of skepticism which undermines the will of a person to resist both the blandishments and the bullying of the power politicians. "There is little doubt," Orwell argued, "that the modern cult of power worship is bound up with the modern man's feeling that life here and now is the only life there is. If death ends everything, it becomes much harder to believe that you can be in the right even if you are defeated. Statesmen, nations, theories, causes are judged almost inevitably by the test of material success."[75]

But while recognizing that the decay of belief in personal immortality had "left a big hole," Orwell could think of no other doctrine or principle or code of conduct potent enough to put up in its place as an obstruction to the dictators. As an unbeliever, moreover, he could harbor none of Burckhardt's quiet hope that a revival of otherworldly religion will salvage civilization, nor could he have found solace in Solzhenitsyn's faith that finally common sense and Christianity must crack through ideology and the obsession with total power. For Orwell, as for his character Winston Smith, there could be no appeal to Heaven, no repair to the catacombs: the God of the

prayer book was gone, and with him all the supernatural sanctions against inhuman cruelty and caprice.

Here then is a cardinal shortcoming in Orwell. Perceptive as he may have been in diagnosing the disease and pinpointing its cause, he had no cures to prescribe. For that reason it is misleading to liken *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, as some of Orwell's admirers have done, to Hobbes's *Leviathan*, a book which not only diagnoses with inexorable logic the ills of seventeenth-century England but also points to a possible remedy, however radical, for those ills. But if in Orwell's work we find no antidote to totalitarianism—nothing, at any rate, beyond a forlorn faith in common decency—at least we may gain some understanding of the disease and perhaps even some insights that have escaped the scholars. Moreover, by examining Newspeak and its Nazi and Communist antecedents, we may come to understand better the critical importance of language for totalitarian politics—and just possibly find some clues to the mystery of how far language shapes our thinking.

One further observation. It will occur to many readers that totalitarian governments are hardly unique in doing violence to language. The corruption of political discourse has a long and ignoble history, and unfortunately democracies have often figured prominently in it. In Athens itself, the very cradle of democracy, the abuse of language by politicians apparently was so rampant that Plato devoted an entire dialogue, the *Gorgias*, to condemning public orators who used rhetoric to flatter the masses and pervert justice. In our own time, democratic politics has entered the age of polispots, sound bites, and vacuous morning-in-America sloganeering; and as a consequence public discourse has suffered. More often it obscures the facts and plays upon the emotions rather than communicating knowledge or provoking thought. Politicians and public-relations experts have become masters of the euphemistic phrase, the superlative expression, the perversion of meaning. How, one might ask, is all of this any different from what totalitarian governments do?

What makes the abuse of language by totalitarian governments different and more reprehensible is that it is far more intense and systematic and has the backing of coercive terror. The totalitarian party perverts language with a consciousness of purpose and a determination normally lacking in democratic politicians, who have to deal with a relatively free press and a legal opposition which constantly challenge the claims of government. "In democracies," Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., has pointed out, "the assault on language is piecemeal, sporadic and unorganized" by comparison with Communist and fas-

cist states.[76] It would hardly be necessary to say this if it were not for the efforts in recent years of the National Council of Teachers of English and other groups and individuals to convince the public that America has evolved a Newspeak language. One person has compiled what he calls a Newspeak dictionary, which on close inspection turns out not to be a Newspeak dictionary but a dictionary of ordinary American bureaucratic patter and inane professional jargon. Another writer has produced a so-called doublespeak dictionary which includes much the same sort of entries. It does contain the Newspeak word *duckspeak*, but to illustrate it the author cited a newspaper account of a medical examination given to the prizefighter George Foreman. A neurosurgeon, the reporter had written, "administered brain-wave tests to the fighter and they showed nothing."[77] An amusing example, but what does it have to do with Orwell's duckspeak? Ironically, to judge from books like these the word *Newspeak* itself has been debased. It is not my purpose to explain why or how this has happened. But I do hope that this study will help to recover the original sense of *Newspeak* and to make plain the most important distinctions between democratic and totalitarian language.

PART ONE

NEWSPEAK

CHAPTER ONE

THE WORLD IN 1984: THE FUNCTION OF NEWSPEAK

"Despotism. A sovereignty unlimited, that is, the *suprema lex*, the *summa potestatis* in one. This has rarely, if ever, existed but in theory."[1] So wrote John Adams, political sage and former president, in 1814. In George Orwell's vision of 1984, what Adams regarded as a near-impossibility has come to pass: despotism has crystallized. There now exist several truly unlimited sovereignties—nothing like the hedonistic dystopia of Huxley's *Brave New World*, but nightmare regimes possessed of unmitigated power to inflict pain and oppress the soul. By comparison the old totalitarians, the Nazis and the Communists, were mild: they merely chastised with whips, while the new ones chastise with scorpions. No longer do the dictators pretend to champion what President Sukarno of Indonesia called "guided democracy." No longer do they persuade themselves, as does the Grand Inquisitor in Dostoevsky's tale, that they are the shepherds of human happiness.

They are not even avaricious, these new rulers; they have no private material interests to protect, socialist collectivism having abolished by mid-century the institution of private property. What they covet is not private wealth but public power, power for its own sake and as its own object; for "God is power." Power is asserted sadistically by making people suffer.[2] And it is maintained by manipulating language.

Orwell's novel sketches a grim geopolitical picture. The world by 1984 has at last broken up into three superstates—Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia—whose rulers have surmounted all the problems that enfeebled and finally led to the overthrow of earlier oligarchs. Although internally these superstates tend to resemble one another, they nevertheless make war among themselves incessantly upon the peripheries of the planet, the disputed frontier areas that separate and shield them from one another. These are limited engagements, never issuing in more than tactical triumphs for any side. A superstate may seize some patch of contested territory by perfidiously switching allies at opportune hours, but the balance of power will never be jarred out of equilibrium. Each state is economically self-sufficient and mighty enough to repulse the other two even in concert.[3]

But here is the supreme irony: even though each possesses an arsenal of atomic bombs and other wonder weapons, and even though victory is the avowed objective of each, none of the superstates really wishes to subdue the others. To use the atomic bomb would be to end the war, either in conquest or in general conflagration, and to end the war would be to knock out from beneath them the chief prop of their political economies. For the whole function of war in this most sinister of worlds is not to vanquish a foreign enemy; it is "to keep the structure of society intact" and hence to maintain in power the ruling elites. Besides furnishing slave labor from subjugated provinces, the war consumes the wealth of nations, preventing its diffusion among the general populations. This is crucial, for wealth would bring leisure, leisure would lead to contemplation, and contemplative people might question the need for privileged and overpowerful classes. From the standpoint of the rulers, therefore, poverty is a much-desired condition from which the war conveniently diverts the attention of the masses. And, of course, the war and the organization and methods it entails make more tenable the hierarchical arrangement of society and the suppression of liberty. In effect, therefore, the elites are waging war less against one another than against their own peoples.[4]

Within Oceania, the setting of the novel, society is so structured

as to make almost unbreakable the hold of the governing caste upon its subjects. At the bottom of the social hierarchy lie the passively subordinate proles, the working class who make up 85 percent of the population. The Party itself contains the other two classes, an Inner and an Outer Party. Members of the Outer Party administer the machinery of state. The much tinier Inner Party, most privileged and powerful group of all, constitutes "the brain of the State." At the head of the whole organization stands Big Brother, the infallible figurehead to whom are attributed "every success, every achievement, every victory, every scientific discovery, all knowledge, all wisdom, all happiness, all virtue."[5]

Ranged against the great repressive Leviathan is Winston Smith, a secretly dissident member of the Outer Party and an employee in the Records Department of the Ministry of Truth (known in Newspeak, the official language, as *Minitrue*). Not surprisingly, his rebellion ends in failure, but in following its doomed course we come to learn how the Party increases people's subjection to the state by decreasing their consciousness of reality. To be sure, various diversions such as physical deprivation and discomfort, the almost continuous blast of the *telescreens*, the controlled fury called forth during Hate Week, and the ever-raging war fever contribute in their own way to lessening people's awareness of bondage to Big Brother. But the assault upon consciousness strikes deeper still. It involves the perversion of language and the obliteration of history and objective truth.

Let us consider at some length the assault upon truth and history. "The Parliament," James Otis exclaimed during a famous speech on the Sugar Act in 1764, "cannot make 2 and 2, 5: omnipotency [itself] cannot do it."[6] Otis erred. For in Oceania even this mathematical absurdity is possible; the omnipotent Party has so decreed: "TWO AND TWO MAKE FIVE."[7] Such miracles are wrought by attacking and undermining the idea of objective truth. With the certitude of a Sophist, O'Brien, the Inner Party inquisitor, tells Winston during one of the many torture sessions that follow his arrest: "Outside man there is nothing." That is to say, reality is only what we perceive it to be; it exists "inside the skull," not in the external world.[8] What does this imply? That by controlling the mind, if it controls the mind, the Party controls reality. Hence whatever it asserts to be true is true, even that twice two is five. For who can question with confidence and security the Party's assertions? Without objective standards of truth, without a scientific ethos, without written laws or a recognition of imperishable principles of natural justice that impose limits upon Party conduct—all of which things the Party has denied them in its

bid to control the mind—ordinary citizens can but credit every word of Big Brother, sole source of certainty and authority in a world cut adrift from the past.[9]

For the past as earlier generations had understood it has in fact been very nearly severed from people's consciousness. There are three reasons the Party tampers with history. The first reason is that the past provides standards of comparison with the present. If, for example, a Party member could know that life was less harsh in the capitalist epoch than under the tutelage of the Party, he might not as cheerfully abide the reign of Big Brother. A second and more important reason is that Big Brother—the Party—cannot err. His predictions must always come to pass, his doctrines must never change, his word must carry always the weight of divine revelation. When his predictions do not in fact come to pass, when Party doctrine does in fact change—as change it must, given the periodic realignments in the world balance of power—the facts must be fudged or forgotten. If today the foreign enemy is Eurasia, the enemy must always have been Eurasia.[10] A third reason for distorting the historical record, one might conjecture, is that it has a way of bringing to mind the tragic dimension of life and the seeming intractability of the human condition, together with the fugitive nature of all attempts hitherto to set up on earth, in whatever guise and by whatever name it is known, either the New Jerusalem of millenial longing or the New Pandemonium of dictatorial ambition. For those who believe that all things are possible and who would remake human nature upon rational principles, whether noble or ignoble, such knowledge is an obvious inconvenience and a source of chagrin.

Hence the incessant hacking away at history. "The mutability of the past" is said to be "the central tenet of Ingsoc" or English socialism, the official ideology. "Past events, it is argued, have no objective existence, but survive only in written records and in human memories." The Party controls the records and thus—at least to the extent it also controls human memories—the past as well. Every trace of what has gone before is being scrubbed away. Books and documents are destroyed or rewritten, photographs doctored or faked, films reedited, sound tracks altered, all "in the interests of accuracy." So thoroughly has the Party done its work of revising history that the revisers themselves have lost the track of time: pathetically, Winston Smith is only "fairly sure" he is thirty-nine and that the present year is 1984.[11]

But what of memory? How can the rulers control that? How can an intelligent Party member be made to forget, for instance, that Eurasia was once an ally and not an enemy? Several years before

publishing *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Orwell speculated that in order to meet challenges of this nature and perpetuate itself, a totalitarian regime would eventually need to create "a schizophrenic system of thought, in which the laws of common sense held good in everyday life and in certain exact sciences, but could be disregarded by the politician, the historian, and the sociologist."[12] The "schizophrenic system of thought" that Oceania's Party employs, and that helps the dedicated Party member to forget what he is forbidden to remember, is called "reality control" or, in Newspeak, *doublethink*. *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*, better known as *the book*, an underground tract attributed to Emmanuel Goldstein, a renegade Party figure, defines *doublethink* as

> the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them. The Party intellectual knows in which direction his memories must be altered; he therefore knows that he is playing tricks with reality; but by the exercise of *doublethink* he also satisfies himself that reality is not violated. The process has to be conscious, or it would not be carried out with sufficient precision, but it also has to be unconscious, or it would bring with it a feeling of falsity and hence of guilt. *Doublethink* lies at the very heart of Ingsoc, since the essential act of the Party is to use conscious deception while retaining the firmness of purpose that goes with complete honesty. . . . Ultimately it is by means of *doublethink* that the Party has been able—and may, for all we know, continue to be able for thousands of years—to arrest the course of history.[13]

A Party member can believe at the same moment and with equal sincerity that Oceania will conquer the world and that the war must continue in stalemate if the Party is not to forfeit the stupendous power it wields. Or the Party can announce on one day a reduction of the weekly chocolate ration from thirty grams to twenty and report on the next an increase in the ration to twenty grams; and almost everyone believes it—the stupid because of their gullibility, the intelligent because of doublethink. Goldstein adds that "the secret of rulership is to combine a belief in one's own infallibility with the power to learn from past mistakes." Doublethink enables the Party to do this and thereby to immortalize itself. It must be added that the state of limited warfare makes it easier to distort and evade facts in this fashion. So long as a superstate cannot be defeated and overrun, it need not always confront physical reality. Unlike the dreary Berlin bunker in which Adolf Hitler played out to the death his megalomaniacal

fantasies, the total state in 1984 has become "in effect a separate universe within which almost any perversion of thought can be safely practiced."[14]

It is important to note that the Party's assault upon history and truth proceeds with full complicity from its members. The Party, indeed, does not concern itself nearly so much with the proles as with its own rank and file. The multitude, O'Brien observes, has no significance. "Humanity is the Party. The others are outside—irrelevant." Ill-educated and ignorant, and thus incapable of grasping "general ideas" about the nature of society; obsessed with the bogus lotteries and lurid literature supplied them by the Party; held easily in check by the Thought Police, their discontent, such as it is, transmuted readily into hatred of the foreign enemy—the proles pose no threat to the Party and the social system. Lacking political consciousness, they can safely be granted such minor liberties as the right to divorce.[15]

Not so the ruling elite. To its members, least of all the intelligent ones, the Party permits no freedom whatsoever of thought and action. Here is an irony of the first order. For in a sense it is intellectuals who govern Orwell's Oceania. O'Brien, Syme, Ampleforth, Tillotson, and Winston Smith are all brain workers of a sort, and O'Brien, brainiest of the lot, might actually pass for Big Brother himself. All of them make intellectual decisions, and each man in his own way goes about the Party's business with devotion and relish. Without such votaries, in fact, the Party could not function. So that Oceania is an intellectual's world, a Burnhamite society presided over by a managerial aristocracy of bureaucrats, scientists, technicians, public-relations experts, and Party bosses.[16]

But these intellectuals pocket their privileges at a price: they must parrot the Party line and allow themselves to become "credulous and ignorant" fanatics, willing and able by acts of doublethink to swallow any dose of falsehood the Party spoons out. Intellectuals, indeed, are the most adept at doublethink, a fact attested by O'Brien's having helped to write Goldstein's heretical discourse: *the book* obviously tells the truth about Oceanic society, yet O'Brien remains untainted by the heresies he has articulated. According to Goldstein-O'Brien: "In our society, those who have the best knowledge of what is happening are also those who are furthest from seeing the world as it is. In general, the greater the understanding, the greater the delusion: the more intelligent, the less sane."[17] Thus the war fever of Party members surpasses that of the proles, and that of the Inner Party members surpasses that of the Outer. The very people who know that the war among the superpowers is a fraud and the Party

line a deception are least likely to question either. For by training and instinct they are *goodthinkers*, persons "naturally orthodox" and capable of knowing, "without taking thought, what is the true belief or the desirable emotion" at any given moment.[18]

The price paid for "governing" Oceania is therefore the surrender of reason and intellect to Big Brother, an alliance with the state in its war upon freedom of thought, and indeed upon thought itself. The war has its atrocities, more than a few of them committed by the savants. Among Winston's tormentors in the Ministry of Love (*Miniluv*), for instance, are "Party intellectuals, little rotund men with quick movements and flashing spectacles." But curiously, Smith himself is as corrupt as any of them. Even after committing thought-crime and joining the Brotherhood, he continues taking perfectionistic pride in his job at Minitrue, in his ability to perform elaborate forgeries and falsify the past, in his flair for writing Newspeak articles, and in his successful imitation of Big Brother's rhetoric.[19] Perhaps all of this zeal is a sustained display of doublethink.

From the corruption of Oceania's intellectuals it follows that language too—the essential instrument of the intellectual, the vehicle for conveying ideas—has undergone corruption. This is a theme Orwell hammered home relentlessly throughout *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and with good reason: a totalitarian government bent on reducing the individual to an isolated and lonely atom, forbidden to think for himself or to communicate his private thoughts and feelings—forbidden even to have private thoughts and feelings—can hardly remain indifferent about the language that people hear, read, write, and speak. In a dozen diabolical ways it will therefore manipulate, control, and abuse the word.

There are indirect and direct ways of going about this. One of the indirect approaches favored by the Party is to make men and women less articulate by removing their need and desire to write. People seldom correspond anymore, we learn, and when they do, "printed postcards" containing "long lists of phrases" to choose from spare them the trouble of drafting a letter. We find, too, that keeping a diary is a capital offense—partly, of course, because it creates an unofficial record of the past. Not that many people in a world without privacy and solitude would know what to write or how to express themselves in a private journal; Winston can barely begin the first entry of his own supposedly secret diary, and when he does, the result is astonishingly incoherent for someone who happens to be a professional writer of sorts—a striking illustration that by 1984 the succinct expression of truth has become almost a lost art. Even

a fountain pen, by now "an archaic instrument," is a questionable piece of property. Winston has done most of his writing at Minitrue through the *speakwrite*, a device undoubtedly requiring less time and thought than writing with a pen—and this, certainly, is one reason the Party employs it. Writing contemplatively, pen upon paper, actually seeing one's thoughts take form in front of one's face, thereby stimulating further reflection, might somehow sharpen one's intellect and heighten one's consciousness—might make one, in Lord Bacon's phrase, "an exact man." The Party cannot allow such a thing.[20]

Nor can it leave the creation of literature to the operations of chance and private impulse. Here is another angle of its attack upon language. From the mammoth Ministry of Truth, with its thousands of windowless rooms and numberless anonymous bureaucrats, there issues a whole literature made to order, the only obtainable reading matter in all of Oceania. It conforms, of course, to the current Party line. More fascinating than its content is the manner of its production. Committees do much of the work; machines handle the rest. Thus words for songs flow forth from devices called *versificators*, and the plots of novels emerge from kaleidoscopic contraptions run by Party workers, with Rewrite Squads touching up the material and packaging it for the public. Ironically, then, it is not the artist in a garret but machines and manual laborers in greasy overalls who turn out most of the literature. Books have become merely a mass-produced commodity, "like jam or bootlaces." Except in the work of fifth-rate orthodox talents like the poet Ampleforth, literary art as the product of creative minds and as a source of enrichment for language has ceased to exist.[21]

Before the Age of Big Brother, most literature of lasting significance moved men to meditation, lifted them out of their isolation from one another, called attention to their common humanity—in a word, made them more human. By contrast the Party would kill thought, increase the isolation of man from man, foment hatred and intolerance between them—in a word, make them less human. To that end it not only for all practical purposes abolishes the literature of the past, the great as well as the forgettable, but cultivates in its members a degrading and dehumanizing form of speech. This new mode of expression has two salient features.

First is its exaltation of the state at the expense of the individual. As used by the Party, language exalts the state in two ways. One is by harping upon the limitless power of government, by characterizing the Party, for instance, as "invincible," "all-powerful," "immortal," and Big Brother as a "colossus" bestriding the world, a "rock" smash-

ing all enemies to smithereens. By comparison the individual is puny and powerless, a mere "cell" in a vast pulsing political organism.[22] The other way is by describing the state, its institutions, and its activities in pseudoreligious terms. In this reverential type of discourse, Big Brother is one's personal "Savior," Party members serve as his "priests," the principles of Ingsoc are "sacred," and Party dissidents are treated as "heretics" who must be led to "penitence" and "converted" to the love of Big Brother. Before the majesty of such a Savior and the force of such a faith the individual can only cringe in "utter submission."[23]

The second dehumanizing feature of Party language is its violence and brutality. From telescreen to cinema to Party circulars, from public hangings to Hate Week to triumphal marches, through every medium and at almost every moment, the imagery and the reality of sadism, cruelty, and vengeance are impressed upon the public consciousness. Much of this is directed at Goldstein and other persons continually vilified as "traitors and counterrevolutionaries." But the accent on violence is especially pronounced in connection with the war. Only listeners accustomed to vehement expression could fail to feel a chill in the blood when, against a background of fanfares and martial music, an announcer on the telescreen proclaims the latest "glorious victory" at the battlefront, following this with "a gory description of the annihilation of a Eurasian army," or when he reads with "brutal relish" a report on the progress of Oceanic military technology.[24]

Because of the war and the martial spirit of the Party, the whole language has become militarized, so that clocks are set to military time and officials of the Ministry of Plenty are said to plan battles for production, much as generals conceive and carry out a campaign of conquest. The Party's obsession with violence has affected profoundly the speech and thought of its entire membership. Favorite topics of lunchtime conversation, for instance, include helicopter raids on enemy villages and the "complete and final elimination of Goldsteinism." Even the children of Party members are apt to dwell upon public executions and the extermination of spies and various other "strange" people. The brutality and violence of discourse, public and "private," must inevitably attend the new world the Party is calling into being, for that world, as O'Brien pictures it, is to be "a world of fear and treachery and torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but *more* merciless as it refines itself."[25]

Important as they are, the degradation of literature and the de-

humanization of speech make up only a fraction of the Party's total strategy for undermining the integrity of the spoken and written word. For a fuller appreciation of the subtlety and the systematic nature of this strategy, we must examine what the Party intends to fashion into the official language of the grave new world: Newspeak.

We arrive now at the real secret of the immortality with which the Party hopes to vest itself. "Genuine progress," Orwell once wrote, "can only happen through increasing enlightenment, which means the continuous destruction of myths."[26] Since the Party intends to stifle progress and perpetuate its myths, it naturally must seek to prevent enlightenment and in fact to fold back the frontiers of men's knowledge in order to keep them in everlasting twilight. To do that, it has invented Newspeak, the focal point of the Party's semantic warfare against humanity.

The official language of the Party, parlance of its propagandists and glossolalia of Big Brother, Newspeak is a shredded-down, dehydrated form of English used in some publications and increasingly in common conversation among Party members. Indeed, by the middle of the twenty-first century, when the eleventh and definitive edition of the Newspeak dictionary is scheduled to appear and the language should assume its final shape, Newspeak will be the only tongue spoken or written by members of the Party. For their part the proles will continue talking and thinking in cockney or in Oldspeak (standard English), this being the will of the Party, which would reinforce the cleavage of classes in Oceania by creating a cleavage of language. Presumably, since the three superstates have similar social and political systems, variations on Newspeak have also been developed in Eurasia and Eastasia.

According to Orwell's appendix to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the purpose of Newspeak is to give expression to the worldview of the Party and to deprive people of the power to conceive and communicate heretical ideas.[27] The implicit assumptions are that thoughts are inseparable from the words that express them and that by controlling the word—by wiping it out or by modifying its sense in some way—one controls or even eliminates the thought. The task of mutating the English language into an instrument of totalitarian domination has been given to a team of Party philologists. Theirs is the work of decades, but these intellectuals know where they are going and how to get there. Their techniques for gradually transforming the mother tongue include the compartmentalization of its vocabulary, the narrow definition or redefinition of words to give them fixed and fully orthodox meanings, the outright abolition of words, and

the coining of ideologically loaded terms with characteristics peculiarly conducive to orthodox thinking. Let us enlarge on each of these in turn.

Party philologists have compartmentalized the language into three distinct vocabularies. Words denominating "concrete objects or physical actions" and used in everyday life and labor, such as *hit*, *run*, *dog*, and *tree*, have been assigned to the so-called A vocabulary of Newspeak.[28] Political and ideological terms introduced by the Party comprise the B vocabulary, and lists of specialized terms used exclusively by scientists and technicians make up the C category.

What is unique about the C vocabulary besides its specialization is that no one apart from philologists is allowed to know all of its words. By the year 2050 a physicist will know the list of physics terms, a chemist the chemistry terms, and an engineer the engineering terms, but no single expert will have access to all the lists. Whatever is not essential to performing his job will be kept out of his hands and head. Nor does the C vocabulary contain a core of terms linking the various lists and relating them to a more general notion of science as a mode of inquiry and a manner of thinking. The word "science" itself appears in none of the Newspeak vocabularies, its closest equivalent being the B-word *Ingsoc*, which designates something vastly different from and indeed directly contrary to the conception of science held by Bacon, Pasteur, or Einstein.[29]

By striking "science" and segregating the C-lists, the Party in effect is telling its scientists and technologists: There is no gainsaying that we need your services, for without your expertise we could hardly hope to refine the technology of surveillance and warfare and bring it to bear on our enemies. But make certain you set your minds to the immediate task only; never lift your eyes to look beyond the narrow sphere of the responsibilities given you by the Party. Above all, do not delude yourselves that you are pursuing knowledge for its own sake or serving a figmental master named Science. You exist to do the bidding of Big Brother, since it is by his pleasure that you exist at all, and for that reason you must never flirt with such prerevolutionary notions as objectivity and detachment, mere abstractions that can only make reality control more difficult for you to achieve. To reduce the danger of your committing such a thoughtcrime, we have limited your technical vocabularies to the smallest number of words necessary to fulfill your particular duties. Any more than these might create needless possibilities for falling into heresy.

As thinking persons, scientists might form an island of autonomy in totalitarian society, yet the state cannot dispense with their skills. It

therefore tolerates them but turns them as nearly as possible into narrow functionaries who merely follow the directives and implement the decisions of their Party superiors.

Although the three vocabularies have different functions and overlap exceedingly little, they are alike in that all of the words within them have been rigidly defined or redefined. Here is the philologists' second technique for transforming language. Multiplicity of meaning, ambiguity, nuance and subtlety, and every hint of heresy in a word and its definition have been done away with. *Good*, for example, presumably an A-word, means to be in conformity with Big Brother's will. *Free*, another A-word, can be used in the sense of "This dog is free from lice" but never legitimately with its Oldspeak import of "politically free" or "intellectually free," for the Newspeak dictionary offers no such shade of meaning for it. So also with *equal*: one can say in Newspeak that men are equal, but this can refer only to physical equality, not political, moral, or social. "The concept of political equality no longer existed, and this secondary meaning had accordingly been purged out of the word *equal*."[30] If either *free* or *equal* carried political import in Newspeak, it would belong in the B rather than the A vocabulary, and it would be placed there only after being given a safely orthodox definition which perverted the Oldspeak signification of the term.

The redefinition of terms is all of one piece with the Party's war against the past. Aside from ruins and monuments and scattered mementos, men know history only through language. However, history-in-language need not take the form of biographies and chronicles. A solitary term is itself a sort of "tiny time capsule," the content of which recapitulates part of a people's experience. And an entire dictionary—an Oldspeak dictionary, at any rate—is an extensive record of what went on before, a mine of information about the ways and works, the thoughts and feelings of earlier generations. Many of its entries besides "free" and "equal" can evoke myriad and mysterious connotations and memories of an age when government was more limited and men and women were less constrained. From the Party's point of view, the variety and richness of the organic growth that we call natural language pose a clear and present danger to its rule and a possible impediment in its struggle to abolish the past. Hence the need to narrow the meanings and get rid of the niceties of words.

But there is another way to squeeze the history out of language. At least as important as peeling away the "useless" layers of meaning in a word is the technique of deleting a word itself from the language. Year by year under pressure from Party philologists the

Newspeak lexicon shrinks toward an absolute minimum number of necessary terms. "Each reduction was a gain, since the smaller the area of choice, the smaller the temptation to take thought."[31] How, specifically, do the experts manage this compression of language?

First, they shear away synonyms. "Cut," for example, is eliminated because the noun-verb *knife* covers the same meaning.[32]

Second, they push to an artificial extreme the natural linguistic process of functional shift, the interchangeability of parts of speech in English. Theoretically, all Newspeak words, even conjunctions such as *if* and *when*, can act as nouns or verbs as well as adjectives or adverbs. The *speak* in *Newspeak*, for instance, is both verb and noun, rendering unnecessary the retention of "speech." The word *think*, originally just a verb, takes the place of "thought," serving as both noun and verb; from this are derived the B-vocabulary compounds *crimethink* (thoughtcrime) and *thinkpol* (Thought Police).[33]

Third, most adjectives and adverbs are swept away by extensively using standard prefixes and suffixes, such as *un-*, *ante-*, *post-*, *up-*, *down-*, *plus-*, *doubleplus-*, *-ful*, and *-wise*. Thus in Newspeak *undark* can mean light or, depending upon the whims of Party philologists, *unlight* can mean dark. At any rate, either "light" or "dark" is eliminated, and the language has one word fewer. Similarly, *speedful*, *speedwise*, *pluscold*, and *doublepluscold* replace the expressions "rapid," "quickly," "very cold," and "superlatively cold."[34]

Fourth, additional words are expunged by regularizing the grammar of Newspeak. For instance, plurals are invariably formed by adding *-s* or *-es*. The plural of *man* therefore becomes *mans*; of *ox*, *oxes*; and of *life*, *lifes*—the irregular "men," "oxen," and "lives" being discarded. Moreover, adjectives form comparisons by adding *-er* or *-est*, as in *good*, *gooder*, *goodest*; words like "better" and "best" pass out of use together with "more" and "most." Furthermore, most Newspeak verbs inflect regularly. Hence the principal parts of *steal* are *steal*, *stealed*, and *stealed*; "stole" and "stolen" have become obsolete. On the other hand, auxiliary verbs, pronouns, and demonstrative adjectives continue to inflect irregularly and in their old forms. "Whom," however, is suppressed as superfluous, as are "shall" and "should" ("I shall go immediately," "I should have liked to see you"), since *will* and *would* cover their meanings.[35]

Another method of eliminating words as well as the concepts they name is to substitute a single new term, vaguely defined and elastically applied, for "whole batteries" of old ones. Indistinguishably subsumed under the label *sexcrime*, for example, are the names for all sorts of officially frowned-upon sexual practices, from homosexuality

to heterosexual intercourse practiced purely for the pleasure of it. Words related to ideas of liberty and equality, moreover, are replaced by *crimethink*, and those connected with objectivity and rationalism merge into *oldthink*. In this manner "justice," "honor," "morality," "religion," "democracy," "internationalism," and a host of other terms deemed too dangerously evocative to preserve have been blotted out along with the concepts associated with them.[36]

By massacring some words and by mutilating or narrowing the sense of so many others, the Party's philologists have greatly diminished the possibilities for thoughtcrime: "Ideas inimical to Ingsoc could only be entertained in a vague wordless form, and could only be named in very broad terms which lumped together and condemned whole groups of heresies without defining them in doing so. . . . [For a person reared on Newspeak] there would be many crimes and errors which it would be beyond his power to commit, simply because they were nameless and therefore unimaginable."[37]

As if restricting definitions and reducing and compartmentalizing vocabulary were not enough, the Party has other tricks it plays with words, especially those of the B vocabulary. Compounded of one-syllable words or parts of words, these strange constructions, most of which express as sharply and precisely as possible the worldview of the Party, are designed "to impose a desirable mental attitude upon the person using them."[38] From Orwell's description, there appear to be four overlapping groups of B-words in addition to the "blanket" terms like *crimethink* and *oldthink*. One group consists of euphemisms, pleasant names for unpleasant things. Among these are *joycamp* for forced-labor camp; *Minipax* for Ministry of Peace, which is actually a ministry of war; and *goodsex* for loveless and pleasureless procreation by married couples.[39] Another group comprises words fraught with ambivalence, "having the connotation 'good' when applied to the Party and 'bad' when applied to its enemies." *Duckspeak*, for instance, means "to quack like a duck," a derisive expression when referring to Goldstein but a piece of praise when referring to a loyal Party member, signifying as it does that he is unthinkingly quacking out orthodox opinions.[40] Yet a third group is made up of words that are brutally "frank and contemptuous" in advertising the truth about various aspects of life in Oceania. Such a word is *prolefeed*, which refers to the vulgar forms of diversion—football and films, lotteries and pornographic literature, tabloids and pop tunes—made available to the working class as a kind of social and political sedative.[41] Preoccupied with prolefeed, the masses remain oblivious to oppression and resigned to the hardship and dirtiness of day-to-day existence.

A fourth class of B-words embraces abbreviations and stump compounds like *Minitrue* and *Recdep* (the Records Department of the Ministry of Truth), new words consisting of syllables extracted from old ones. In a passage worth quoting at length for its rather shrewd insight, Orwell explained the predilection of Party neologists for these expressions:

> The name of every organization, or body of people, or doctrine, or country, or institution, or public building, was invariably cut down into the familiar shape; that is, a single easily pronounced word with the smallest number of syllables that would preserve the original derivation. . . . This was not done solely with the object of saving time. Even in the early decades of the twentieth century, telescoped words and phrases had been one of the characteristic features of political language; and it had been noticed that the tendency to use abbreviations of this kind was most marked in totalitarian countries and totalitarian organizations. Examples were such words as *Nazi*, *Gestapo*, *Comintern*, *Inprecorr*, *Agitprop*. In the beginning the practice had been adopted as it were instinctively, but in Newspeak it was used with a conscious purpose. It was perceived that in thus abbreviating a name one narrowed and subtly altered its meaning, by cutting out most of the associations that would otherwise cling to it. The words *Communist International*, for instance, call up a composite picture of universal human brotherhood, red flags, barricades, Karl Marx, and the Paris Commune. The word Comintern, on the other hand, suggests merely a tightly knit organization and a well-defined body of doctrine. It refers to something almost as easily recognized, and as limited in purpose, as a chair or a table. *Comintern* is a word that can be uttered almost without taking thought, whereas *Communist International* is a phrase over which one is obliged to linger at least momentarily. In the same way, the associations called up by a word like *Minitrue* are fewer and more controllable than those called up by *Ministry of Truth*. This accounted not only for the habit of abbreviating whenever possible, but also for the almost exaggerated care that was taken to make every word easily pronounceable.[42]

"Easily pronounceable": a requirement considered so important for all the Newspeak vocabularies, but especially the B one, that in their pursuit of it the philologists will bend if necessary the rule of regularity in grammar and spelling. Why the emphasis on easy utterance? Because it facilitates duckspeak. The Party insists on orthodoxy; orthodoxy means unconsciousness; unconsciousness means the

ability to blurt out approved opinions "as automatically as a machine gun spraying forth bullets." The compounds of the B vocabulary, generally consisting of two or three crisp syllables apiece, "with the stress distributed equally between the first syllable and the last," lend themselves well to this thoughtless form of locution. For by their tone and texture and their very vogue within the Party they promote "a gabbling style of speech," as Orwell describes it, "at once staccato and monotonous." In his essay on the origin of languages, Jean-Jacques Rousseau argued that because of their sonorousness some tongues are more suited than others for the oratory of democratic assemblies and hence are highly "favorable to liberty." On the other hand, the Party appears to believe that because of its stridency Newspeak can lend support to slavery and the process of dehumanization. As with the duckspeaker overheard by Winston in the canteen, a person capable of raucous rapid-fire delivery seems less a human being than a dummy. The ventriloquist is the Party.[43]

For the moment the dummy is only an exception, an advance link in the devolutionary chain leading to the New Party Man. But by the time Newspeak supplants Oldspeak altogether, his kind will predominate. For at that stage, if the reduction of vocabulary and the manipulation of sound and meaning have worked their magic and if human nature is not so resilient as to have withstood this sustained assault upon it, "articulate speech" by Party members will have become little more than a noise emitted through the larynx "without involving the higher brain centers at all."[44] Obedience will then be entire, servitude total; freedom a forgotten frill, the dehumanization of man into a stimulus-response mechanism an accomplished fact. In the future time, to paraphrase a real-life predecessor of Big Brother, men will go the way the Party dictates with the assurance of a sleepwalker, exiles forever from what Kant called the land of thought (*Land des Denkens*). In the words of Syme, a Party philologist who understands too well for his own good what Newspeak is all about: "The Revolution will be complete when the language is perfect."[45] That is to say, totalitarianism will be truly totalitarian when living men and women cease to think.

But all of this still lies ahead. In the intervening decades the Party has put its specialists to work translating into Newspeak some of the great literary and philosophical productions of the past. The names of Shakespeare, Milton, Dickens, and other immortals—prerevolutionary oldthinkers, all of them—will be kept in circulation solely for "considerations of prestige"; and, of course, the new versions of their masterpieces will completely pervert the sense of the originals. In

Newspeak, for example, the opening passage of Jefferson's Declaration of Independence—the lines about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—would be most exactly and truthfully rendered in only one distensive term: *crimethink*. "A full translation could only be an ideological translation, whereby Jefferson's words would be changed into a panegyric on absolute government."[46] Not even by circumlocution could a Newspeaker manage to paraphrase the passage with accuracy. He lacks the words and significations to do so.

"Great literature," Ezra Pound once wrote, "is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree."[47] On the other hand, a language drained of politically unacceptable meanings, robbed of rich connotations, and left with only six words to cover the ideas of goodness and badness is not the stuff of great literature. (The six words are *good*, *plusgood*, *doubleplusgood*, *ungood*, *plusungood*, *doubleplusungood*.) No poets among the duckspeakers! But since great literature arouses the imagination and the moral sense, making the mind, as Shelley said of the power of poetry, "the receptacle of a thousand unapprehended combinations of thought"[48]—clearly a thing threatening to the rulers of Oceania—it pleases the Party to fashion and put into effect so aesthetically and intellectually barren a language as Newspeak.

"Newspeak," wrote William Steinhoff in *George Orwell and the Origins of "1984,"* "is the principal intellectual means by which doublethink is transformed into a conditioned reflex."[49] Indeed, as Syme suggests in a conversation with Winston, when Newspeak appears in perfected form and becomes the sole language of Party members, the need for doublethink will vanish. Doublethink suppresses thoughtcrime by unbalancing the sense of reality; Newspeak will make thoughtcrime impossible to conceive in the first place. Able to think only in Newspeak, one might feel discontentment with the Party line but would lack the ability to give expression to that feeling, like Clover in *Animal Farm* or like Solzhenitsyn's average Soviet citizen, arrested by the secret police, who fails to cry for help as agents of the KGB drag him through a subway station: he has not yet acquired "the mature concepts on which a shout of protest to the crowd must be based. . . . He simply *does not know what* to shout."[50] Knowing no other tongue than Newspeak, one can accept only the Party's interpretation of history and reality, for the language admits no alternative interpretations. "The limits of my language," Wittgenstein postulated, "mean the limits of my world."[51] Inasmuch as it acts on the same assumption, the Party would concur. For if, as O'Brien would have it, reality is ensconced in the skull and if through

language the Party governs what goes into every skull—molds the individual and collective consciousness, in other words—then it can limit the world in any way it will. And what it wills is to make the world seem less oppressive than it really is.[52]

Already the Party has gone far in its attempts to use language for that purpose. This is evident from the failure of official words to fit the realities of life in Oceania. The disjuncture between rhetoric and reality is exactly the sort of thing we would expect to find in the age of doublethink. "All the beliefs, habits, tastes, emotions, mental attitudes that characterize our time are really designed to sustain the mystique of the Party and prevent the true nature of present-day society from being perceived."[53] So writes Goldstein-O'Brien, and one may add that words and slogans assist in the deception.

Consider a favorite word of Party propagandists: "victory." In the reign of Big Brother this term has become practically synonymous with defeat and degradation. Winston lives in Victory Mansions, a complex of dilapidated flats. He smokes Victory Cigarettes that fall apart when picked up. He drinks Victory Coffee and Victory Gin, sickening substances that help reconcile Winston, as it were, to his personal defeats and final annihilation by the state. Or again, consider some of the slogans and superlative phrases trumpeted over and over by the Party. As Winston and two of his comrades consume an unappetizing lunch in the canteen at Minitrue, a voice from the telescreen announces another victory in "the battle for production," a 20 percent increase in the standard of living. The voice continues: "All over Oceania this morning there were irrepressible spontaneous demonstrations when workers marched out of factories and offices and paraded through the streets with banners voicing their gratitude to Big Brother for the new, happy life which his wise leadership has bestowed upon us."[54] But the demonstrations, if there were any, were obviously not spontaneous, and Big Brother most certainly has not brought about a new, happy life. The old fear, drudgery, and scarcity persist. The Party honeys its words, but reality is bitter to the palate.

As these examples illustrate, the Party has crafted language into a mask of humbug. The combined effect of the euphemisms and superlative expressions it employs is to turn the physical and moral order inside out and upside down. Thus "spontaneous" actions are organized by the state, "voluntary" donations are automatically subtracted from salaries, young people who inform on their parents are cheered as "child heroes," and production goals for boots are "overfulfilled" at a time when half the inhabitants of Oceania walk barefoot.[55] Contrary to the evidence of sensory experience, Party accounts of life

in Oceania portray only prosperity and not paucity, fitness and not infirmity, merriment and not misery.

In one place only does Winston Smith find that words reflect the stark realities, like light passing through the glass paperweight purchased at Mr. Charrington's antique shop. It is "in the place where there is no darkness," the Ministry of Love.[56] There, as he interrogates and tortures Winston, O'Brien speaks with candor of the Party's lust for power, its insane philosophy, its glee at the suffering of captured thought criminals, its plan for reigning supreme through the ages. If the Party has its way, however, such dialogues as engage the minds of O'Brien and Winston will not and cannot take place a half century hence. For minds like theirs will not exist when the Party fully deploys the most formidable of all its weapons for debasing language and eclipsing the consciousness of men: Newspeak. And the ultimate irony is that it is the intellectuals of the Party, the O'Briens and Symes and even the Winston Smiths, who will have made possible the annihilation of intellect and individuality.

Mindful that Orwell was not a professional linguist, a meticulous reader so inclined might find much to fault in his description of totalitarian language. Why, for example, does he have Big Brother retaining in Newspeak, albeit with every layer of unorthodox meaning removed, the words *free* and *equal*? What need of saying "This dog is free from lice" when "This dog has no lice" will say as much, and without risk of anyone recalling the old, heretical meaning of "free" or perhaps arriving at it through metaphorical extension? And why say "All mans are equal" when, as Anthony Burgess has suggested, "All mans are the same" will suffice, again without risk of dangerous recollections?

The problem presented by these two terms, however, may seem a relatively minor matter, resolved with ease by deleting them from the dictionary. More fundamental and difficult is the danger that Newspeak by its very success could undermine the Oceanic regime. The rule of Big Brother rests upon cruelty and the constant crushing of political opposition. "The heretic, the enemy of society," O'Brien insists, "will always be there, so that he can be defeated and humiliated over again."[57] But Newspeak is supposed to preclude heretical thought and hence heretics. What if it does? What if everyone in the Party ends up a groveling goodthinker, with no more Winston Smiths to cause trouble? What happens then to the planted microphones, the telescreens, the informers, the scaffolds, the execution cellars? What becomes of the Ministry of Love? Can there be a Thought Police without thoughtcrime? If Newspeak works, will not all of these

instruments and agencies of repression pass away? And yet Oceania without them would not be Oceania, for they would seem to be essential to a system founded upon hatred and lawless domination.[58]

To say that Orwell was unaware of the contradiction here, or that the contradiction stems from an ambivalent and amateurish conception of language, is perhaps to do less than justice to an astute political and social satirist. More likely the contradiction is a hint that there are unspoken and perhaps unconsciously recognized limits to how much control over language and thought the Party can achieve.

The key to this understanding of the contradiction lies in what might loosely be called the epistemology of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The Party seems to assume that thought without words cannot occur, that some concepts, especially those derived from noumenal or nonsensory experience, cannot be known unless they can also be named; else even a Newspeaker might commit thoughtcrime, and the project of controlling thought through controlling language would go awry. But is wordless thought really impossible? At one point in "Politics and the English Language," Orwell came close to asserting the contrary, and even in two or three places in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* he suggested that thought necessarily precedes language, or at least is not entirely dependent upon it. For instance, the novel's narrator informs us that Winston's heresy started as "a secret, involuntary thought" and that only later, in making his first diary entry, did Winston move "from thoughts to words." According to Orwell's appendix, moreover, the politically unorthodox meanings of *free* and *equal* could not remain in the language because "political and intellectual freedom no longer existed even as concepts, and were therefore of necessity nameless."[59] Apparently even sophisticated ideas need not be encased in words. True as it may be that language greatly structures thought, it may also be true that ideas concerning God, freedom, and justice—the unalienable rights of man, the natural law, the categorical imperative, and so on—have an objective existence all their own and completely apart from language, floating about in some sort of philosophical ether like Plato's *eidoi*. Might not even an Oceanic mind grope its way toward them?

Implicitly the Party recognizes this possibility. Such recognition may explain the survival of *free* and *equal*. If an abstract concept cannot be totally abolished, it may be better in some instances to keep the word for it, but redefined and placed in the purely functional A vocabulary, which pertains only to phenomenal or sensory experience, in an effort to debase the concept. The same need of co-opting and corrupting an idea would account not only for the preservation of

literary classics (in name if nothing else) but also the retention of religious terminology (though it is unclear which of the two nontechnical Newspeak vocabularies, A or B, would include the religious terms). If humanity by nature seeks divinity, if its innate ideas or feelings about the fundamental questions of life and death must drive it down on its knees again and again in admiration, awe, or fear before a power higher than itself, then (the Party may reason) let that power be the state, and let the words with which men describe their admiration, awe, and fear be focused on Big Brother and used to foster the myth of his immortality and omniscient might.

In spite of all these attempts to contain and contaminate heterodox ideas, however, there remains the likelihood that by itself a monopoly of the dictionary will not work, that the new language cannot completely enclose and impoverish thought, and that therefore heresy will still be able to blaze up bothersomely here and there. "The regime can't rest on Newspeak," Michael Walzer has argued in an excellent essay on the failures of totalitarian government, ". . . because the success of Newspeak depends on the success of the regime. Social control is the precondition of linguistic control, and if social control is anything less than total, 'ideas inimical to Ingsoc' will find expression."[60] Thus the continuing need for both repression and doublethink.

Newspeak, then, if the foregoing interpretation is correct, is destined to disappoint its creators. That the appendix on Newspeak is written in standard English and in the past tense lends support to this view. Even if the interpretation is not correct and the apparent inconsistencies in Orwell's treatment of totalitarian language cannot be resolved, they can detract but little from his achievement. What he did is not so much tell us as show us how language might be made the agent of total control. It took an acute imagination to do this. But was it imagination only, or did Orwell's description of future words have a foundation in contemporary fact? This is what we must determine.

Assume—and this is a safe assumption, after all—that Orwell intended his description of totalitarian language, Newspeak and pre-Newspeak, to give us insights into actual totalitarian regimes and their misuse of words. And suppose that instead of presenting these insights through the medium of fiction, he had adopted a favorite approach of social scientists and devised a working model to explain and predict the uses of language by totalitarian governments. What would have been the major components of such a model? To glean them from *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, they would probably include the following six at a minimum.

1. *Intent to control thought and behavior through language.* If Orwell's model is accurate, we should expect that totalitarian rulers and their propagandists, fully aware that language shapes consciousness, will try to manipulate words in such a way as to straiten thought and breed conformity and goodthink among their subjects. By artfully abusing language they will attempt to justify or conceal every abominable deed and every failed policy of their regimes, and by the same device they will explain away every departure from the party line made necessary by the unsettled and shifting circumstances of power politics. If Orwell is correct, or at least if one possible reading of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is correct, they will likely succeed eventually in these endeavors. Their monopoly of the means of mass communication and their ability to define or destroy words will help them attain nearly total control over politics and persons.

2. *Exaltation of the state over the individual.* According to the Orwellian model, totalitarian language will glorify in superlative terms the state and its rulers, assigning to both an almost sacred and superhuman significance. At the same time, it will tend to demean the mass of subordinate men and women by representing them as expendable and perishable cells in the imperishable collective organism of the total state.

3. *Violence and vilification.* Totalitarian rulers will write and speak continually in tones of intolerance, brutality, and rancor. In official rhetoric the enemy soldier, the saboteur, the spy, the traitor, the renegade party member will be ever present as objects igniting hatred and stirring the spirit of revenge in both the masses and the loyal members of the party. In keeping with this need for clear-cut villains, totalitarian language will probably conjure a black-and-white image of life—a we-they view of the world—that ignores the complexity of human nature and existence and rules out moderation in politics. Rendering reality in sharply highlighted, dualistic terms, it will leave no gray areas, no middle ground between good and evil. In the Manichaean outlook and language of totalitarian propaganda, he who is not for us, he who has not linked himself head, hand, and heart with our side, the side of justice, equality, peace, progress, proletarian internationalism, or racial purity, is against us. He lies therefore beyond redemption in the valley of the shadow of Absolute Evil.

4. *Euphemism.* Out of expediency, and in spite of their blatantly violent language, dictators will sometimes resort to euphemism and a smooth tongue. To give a different twist to Theodore Roosevelt's phrase, the totalitarians will speak both softly and harshly and carry a cruel bludgeon, borrowing freely, as it suits their needs, from the

lexicon of peace, happiness, and brotherhood no less than from the lexicon of hatred, vilification, and murder.

5. *Special political terminology.* To express its warped view of the world, the totalitarian party will mint a special ideological vocabulary comparable to Newspeak B. Through the labors of its lexical authorities, undesirable terms and meanings will disappear from dictionaries. The new language will be used by the party and its members but not by the masses.

6. *Failure of words to reflect reality.* The cumulative consequence of the totalitarian party's peculiar jargon, its euphemisms, and its superlative rhetoric will be to create an utterly false image of the world. Through language the dictators will have drawn down an iron curtain of the mind to prevent the rays of reality from piercing the consciousness of their citizen-slaves.

We will soon measure this Orwellian Model of Totalitarian Language against known facts. If it is true to life, we should find close resemblances between the model and the language of historical totalitarian governments and movements. It would be unreasonable, however, to expect Soviet Russian or Nazi German to resemble the Newspeak language itself in every detail. The language of total dictatorship does not spring into being full-blown and parentless; as with Newspeak, each unfictitious totalitarian tongue, be it Soviet or Nazi or Maoist, has evolved from one of the long-established natural languages of the human family, from Russian or German or Chinese, and only by degrees has each even begun to assume anything like the final shrunken and rigid shape of Newspeak. None of them, in fact, has ever come near to attaining such an ideal form. We therefore should not expect totalitarian semanticists to have rewritten instantly and definitively all the dictionaries, for example, any more than we should expect the triumphant totalitarian party to have speedily snuffed out the last, lingering embers of reactionary misbelief. Even the Newspeak dictionary must run through eleven editions, and meanwhile a Winston Smith can still commit mental heresy. But certainly if Orwell intended the evolving language of Newspeak as a kind of paradigm (if not a parody) of totalitarian speech and writing, we at least should expect the keepers of language in Stalinist Russia, say, or in Nazi Germany to have begun the process of tempering and welding words into manacles for the mind. We should detect in the perverse idiom of a Stalin or a Mao, an Ulbricht or a Hitler, a Castro or a Goebbels, the broad tendencies from which Orwell extrapolated the principles of Newspeak.

PART TWO

NAZI GERMAN

CHAPTER TWO

"HE WHO THINKS HAS ALREADY DOUBTED"

Having examined the language of Oceania, we must now examine its antecedents among the totalitarian regimes and movements of the twentieth century. In Parts Two and Three, accordingly, I dissect the language of national socialism and of modern communism. No slight undertaking, this; but one need not write a protracted treatise in order to answer the questions that concern us here: Are there important differences between the National Socialist and Communist languages, and between these and Newspeak? Or do the similarities far exceed the differences? Is there, in other words, such a thing as a distinctive language of totalitarianism? If so, has it worked? Just how effectively have the dictators wielded words as an instrument of oppression? Did Orwell exaggerate the possibilities and the power of language for total control?

I reserve until Part Four my final answers to these questions. In the meantime, to avoid any misunderstanding, I

must stress that when I speak of "Communist" language, I am referring to the language of major twentieth-century Communist parties and their official spokesmen—the language, that is to say, of orthodox Marxist-Leninists: people bent on getting power and then, having gotten it, on using it with unexampled zeal and violence, at least in the early stages of governance. I therefore am going to ignore the language of pretotalitarian socialism, the language of Babeuf or Blanqui or Fourier, for instance, or even of Marx and Engels—except, perhaps, insofar as any of these socialist theoreticians and agitators may have influenced the vocabulary of modern, hard-line Communist parties. Neither will I be concerned with the language of so-called revisionist communism as exemplified by Marshal Tito and the Communist party of Yugoslavia.

Similarly, when I refer to "National Socialist" language, I do not mean the language of Fichte, Rodbertus, Nietzsche, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, or any of the other supposed intellectual precursors of Hitler and his movement. Nor do I mean the style of discourse of those "folkish" nationalist groups alternately ridiculed and courted by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. Rather, I have in mind the public language of Hitler himself and of his most steadfast Party followers, including Goebbels, Goering, Rosenberg, Frank, Himmler, Ley, and uncountable lesser lights in the brown firmament. In fine, I mean the jargon of the motley company of crackpots, criminals, and thugs one thinks of when one sees the word "Nazi."

In treating Nazi and Communist discourse as examples of totalitarian language, I am, of course, assuming that nazism and Marxism-Leninism are fundamentally alike in being totalitarian movements. Certain critics of the totalitarian model have argued that for the sake of conceptual tightness its proponents tend to overlook important differences between the two while accentuating the similarities.[1] This could well be true. At least in theory, nazism and communism do differ sharply over such matters as the proper role of the working class, the nature of violence, the meaning of history, and the destiny of humankind. In practice, moreover, the Soviet Communists went much further than the Nazis were able or willing to go in overturning the old order; Lenin and Stalin entirely destroyed the prerevolutionary class system in Russia, while for expediential reasons Hitler preserved to a large degree the social hierarchy his regime inherited in Germany. But for all the differences between nazism and communism, the similarities are far more impressive. Whatever the professed goals of the two, once they were in power each developed a terroristic police state whose rulers propagated a conspiratorial view

of the world which justified—whether by the laws of race or the laws of history—the extermination of whole categories of people. Significantly, Hitler himself recognized certain affinities between his movement and that of the Bolsheviks, noting that Communists made ideal recruits for national socialism. It is perhaps also significant that he and Stalin were mutual admirers, even after they became the deadliest of enemies. Furthermore, the claim that nazism and communism are more alike than different, and thus belong to the same species of government, has the backing of many East Europeans who have lived under both and have recently made known their disdain for "red fascism."[2]

But in a sense all of this is beside the point, for my purpose is not to prove that the two movements are fundamentally the same. I merely assume they are the same; and if the assumption is correct, we should find that their language is also similar. At the same time, if the facts lead us to a contrary conclusion, it will strengthen the case of those who question what Alexander Groth has called the "'unitotalitarian' approach to the study of modern dictatorships."[3] In either event, the important thing is not that an assumption or a theory is confirmed or disproved but that we come closer to knowing the truth.

The Ideal Nazi

In order to understand and appreciate the function of public language in the Third Reich, we need first to understand the Nazi party's—and above all, Adolf Hitler's—views on politics and the proper role of the masses in a mass society. In a much-quoted passage of *Mein Kampf*, the future dictator of Germany asserted that a successful National Socialist movement will require human creatures "quick as greyhounds, tough as leather, and hard as Krupp steel."[4] Notice that Hitler neglected mentioning mental dexterity as an indispensable trait. On the contrary, it is fair to say, and amply borne out by the record, that he preferred followers unaccustomed to doing their own thinking. Reprehensible as such an attitude may be to someone steeped in the liberal tradition, it follows quite logically from what Hitler regarded as the true purpose of politics. The purpose of politics for Hitler was domination, and it is far easier to dominate the unreflecting and unreasoning person than the person given to thinking matters through for himself.

Strip away the Darwinian ornamentation of Hitler's political views and there remains very little except an obsession with the pursuit

and exercise of power. In a conversation with Hermann Rauschning, National Socialist president of the Danzig Senate, Hitler stated in late 1933 that the new Nazi elite "must be as free as gods from the outlook of the masses. Their supreme, their only purpose in all they do must be to maintain their power." On the same occasion he commented: "The will to power is for us literally the whole meaning of this life."[5] For the sake of maintaining power, the leader of a dynamic movement—the creative revolutionary statesman determined to topple an old order and fashion the world anew—must be a calculating opportunist, willing at all times to abandon any policy, program, or idea that proves an impediment to action.

But how can leaders unshackled by considerations of either morality or doctrine expect from the more conservative masses the gullibility and the undiscerning submission implied in Hermann Goering's admirably terse formula for totalitarian rule: "Command from above, obedience from below"? The answer is that the masses, including the rank and file of Party faithful, must be trained not to take thought before executing orders. "We must distrust the intelligence and the conscience," Hitler counseled, "and must place our trust in our instincts. We have to regain a new simplicity."[6] Ours not to wrangle or to question, or to stand aghast at each new summons to battle and sacrifice; ours but to obey with glad hearts and granite faces.

To induce in their subjects this state of "blind obedience," as they candidly called it, the Nazis endeavored through various devices to break people's power of mental resistance to national socialism. Party rallies, with their sense-bedazzling displays and bewitching oratory, were obviously one such device. Indeed, the *Führer* himself insisted that Party members attend mass meetings because there "thought is eliminated," thus sealing the psychic gulf between intellectuals and workers and producing an undifferentiated and manipulatable crowd. "What you tell the people in the mass, in a receptive state of fanatic devotion," Hitler once claimed, will embed itself in their brains "like words received under an hypnotic influence, ineradicable, and impervious to every reasonable explanation."[7]

If mass meetings were an effective short-term technique for constricting the thought process, a long-term approach entailed nazification of the German classroom. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler asserted that education in a "folkish" state must cast away intellectual "ballast",[8] and after catapulting themselves into power in 1933, the Nazis undertook to translate this principle into action. In German universities, for instance, they speedily dispatched their opponents, capturing

all administrative posts and stocking the faculties with Party activists and the student bodies with informers. Books repellent to Nazi partisans were banned and burned, often with the complicity of academics like the rector of Göttingen, who declared himself "proud of the new appellation—barbarians."[9] Indoctrination in national socialism replaced rational inquiry and openness to ideas in the classroom. The facts of history were shuffled and twisted to prove the superiority of "Aryan blood" and the preeminence of Teutonic peoples. Students grappled with "German" mathematics and "Aryan" physics, which, according to one of the cofounders of quantum mechanics, Professor Pasqual Jordan, had discovered in molecular structure a striking confirmation of the leadership principle (*Führerprinzip*).[10] As might be expected in Hitler's Spartan regime, university curricula tended to emphasize the new *Wehrwissenschaft* or martial science. In short, the German university, like the rest of the country's educational system, was designed to help people think only National Socialist thoughts and to meet Hitler's goal of transforming "a whole nation into a mental state of unconditional military willingness and military readiness"[11]—that is to say, into a state of stupidity and benightedness.

But the German university under the Nazis was Plato's Academy compared to what Hitler had in mind for the Slavic masses in conquered eastern territory. In one of his rambling wartime monologues, recorded and bequeathed to us by Party secretary Martin Bormann, the *Führer* stated that this slave class of the New Order should be trained to recognize road signs but not to read: "The ideal solution would be to teach this people an elementary kind of mimicry. One asks less of them than one does of the deaf and dumb. No special books for them! The radio will be enough to give them the essential information. Of music, they can have as much as they want. They can practise listening to the tap running. I'm against entrusting them with any work that calls for the least mental effort."[12] Hitler seems to have meant every word of this. Perhaps he was aware of a memorandum issued in May 1940 by Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS (*Schutz-Staffel* or Defense Echelon), that prescribed a primary-level education for non-Germans in the East. Under Himmler's scheme an eastern child belonging to an "inferior" race would learn only to write his name, to count to 500, and "that it is God's command that he should be obedient to Germans, honourable, industrious and brave."[13]

So much for the multitude of "eternally disfranchised," German and non-German alike.[14] And we must not imagine that in Hitler's New Order, among the minute *Herren*-class—somewhere, perhaps,

in the alpine recesses of Sonthofen or the cryptic corridors of Wewelsburg Castle—genuine learning would survive untouched and unfettered by fanaticism and imbecility. We must not suppose, for instance, that the maxims and methods of objective science and free inquiry would be secretly kept alive by the Party elite, if only for its own misanthropic purposes. For the SS, from whose ranks Germany, it was hoped, would call forth the nation's future leaders, would not even exempt its own members from an education in mindlessness. True, in its *Ordensburgen* (Castles of the Order) rising representatives of the master race would acquire the technical knowledge to run a ruthless police state. But there they would also learn to resist, in Hitler's phrase, "the temptations of the mind and of sciences presumably free."[15] Critically to think through a matter, to analyze or intellectualize it—to yield, in other words, to the siren tones of "objectivity"—would weaken the will and disperse the kinetic energy of an "action-oriented" racial aristocracy. *Wer denkt, zweifelt schon*, a Nazi slogan warned: "He who thinks has already doubted."[16] And he who doubted might recoil from killing a few dozen Lidicians or dropping the fatal pellet of Cyclone-B. Himmler's men, therefore, if they were to be true to their calling, would learn to abhor intellect and logic, to exalt irrationality and brutal instinct; they would have to become, as it were (with apologies to Rousseau), ignoble savages. But theirs would have to be a controlled irrationality, a single-minded brutality in the service of total power. Never might they question an order or set their own judgment above that of superiors. An SS general summarized well the stern code of black chivalry: "Believe, obey, fight; full stop. That's all."[17] "Think" was never part of the code.

The Nazis, then, as the hysteria of their mass meetings and the anti-intellectualism of their approach to education suggest, sought to people their *Führerstaat* with a race of almost mindless men and women. Or is it an exaggeration to say this? For all of Hitler's insistence that national socialism was a "revolutionary creative will that needs no ideological crutches,"[18] did not the Nazis in practice accept the importance of ideas and hence of thought? Might not one argue, for instance, as do Bracher, Jäckel, and Fest with much cogency, that in fact Hitler and his associates—whatever they may have professed on occasion—did adhere to an ideology and, further, that far from being quick to jettison the ideology as circumstances might demand, they actually believed in the absolute truth of its tenets?[19] Were they not forever preaching the doctrines of anti-Semitism, racial superiority, "blood and soil," the *Volk*? Do these doctrines not add up to some sort of belief system, however incoherent and base it may be?

And would not the existence of a National Socialist ideology imply at least some attention to ideas? Would it not, in other words, suggest at least a modest measure of thinking by both the leadership and its followers?

No one can say with finality that Nazis like Goebbels and Goering took seriously the "eternal truths" they trumpeted with so much sound and fury. To judge from diaries and memoirs, most of them—Alfred Rosenberg, a man almost without influence in the Party's highest echelons after 1933, is the single exception—were uninterested in ideas. Ideology only camouflaged the fierce struggle for mastery and justified the ways of Hitler to man. Hitler himself, whatever he may have believed in his unfathomable heart of hearts, at least claimed to have transcended ideology. He admitted privately, for instance, that the doctrine of Nordic superiority was only a useful propaganda fiction: "I know perfectly well, just as well as all these tremendously clever intellectuals, that in the scientific sense there is no such thing as race."[20] Certain of his policies, such as his alliance with Japan or his friendly relations with Arab countries, are consistent with this and kindred utterances. Even Hitler's undeniable hatred of Slavs and Jews was just that—a ferocious passion, not part of a logical though lunatic system of racial teachings. If Hitler had an ideology, then, it was (as Rauschning always maintained) the ideology of a nihilist, a set of simplistic propositions justifying domination and destruction.

But the question of whether the Nazi rulership really believed in an ideology is less relevant here than the question of what it wanted the German people to believe, and to what end they were supposed to believe this. For pragmatic reasons Nazi chieftains undeniably did champion a public ideology, or an assortment of slogans and catchwords which passed for one, which they cynically employed as a means of mobilizing mass opinion behind the Party and its plans for empire. Of his racialist teaching, for example, Hitler once divulged in private that it served him solely as an idea with which to subvert the old system of nation-states and "get rid of the chaos of an historic past that has become an absurdity. . . . With the conception of race, National Socialism will carry its revolution abroad and recast the world."[21]

Hitler also announced his intention of "stamping the Nazi *Weltanschauung* on the German people."[22] The choice of words is significant. The German public will not be asked to analyze, and then to accept or reject, the radical new worldview. Instead, presumably through propaganda, through indoctrination, through a network of unconscious associations, the Party is going to imprint it upon the

popular mind. The masses will have no say and take as little thought as possible in the matter. And note that it is, after all, a worldview—a way of looking at life, not a way of thinking about it. Hitler was not hawking a philosophy. Indeed, Nazi orators and writers tended to shun that term.[23] "Philosophy" suggests an activity of the mind, calling up images of the contemplative life, of Plato and Aristotle strolling through Academe or Boethius meditating in the dungeon of Alvanzano. But the life of reason was precisely the sort of thing the Brownshirts could least abide. With the rare and baffling exception of a Martin Heidegger or a Carl Schmitt, a reasonable person, especially someone with a philosophical nature, would divine the silliness and the insanity that underlay the Party's imposing slogans. In the totalitarian stream of hatemongering and mass demonstrations, he would stand out as an "island of separateness" and good sense amid the general derangement.

But a true believer in the Nazi worldview, at least as Party literature portrays him, would be altogether a different manner of man. We have met his like already. He acts on instinct. He bubbles with "blind faith" in the Party and its movement. Never does he question the *Führer*'s decisions or search for the logic behind them. As for doctrines, he is content, in Hitler's words, to take in "only a few but very great viewpoints" whose "basic lines are unforgettably branded in his memory."[24] One such viewpoint is belief in Aryan superiority. Another is anti-Semitism. Yet another is the doctrine of *Lebensraum*, and another the mystical mumbo jumbo about blood and soil. Together such teachings are supposed to kindle a conviction that inevitable victory awaits the movement. A Sorelian myth, they should stir in the soul of the true believer irrepressible and primitive enthusiasms that the rulers can tap in the contest with domestic "Marxism" or funnel into the fuel tanks of the Nazi military machine.

But these National Socialist viewpoints—or teachings, or tribal incantations—hardly make up an intricate ideology. They have no substance, or nearly none. They are more like vapor, evoking in men and women an emotional response but almost no reflection. In this particular the contrast with early Marxism is immense. In nineteenth-century Europe one could read *Das Kapital* or the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* and weigh with intelligence and critical detachment the merits and demerits of historical materialism. One could check Marx's system against facts that lay before one's own face. One could test the new teaching by making verifiable predictions—some of them false ones, as it happened—about capitalism and the unfolding of historical processes. Marx, in other words, for all the emotion

and bitterness that buttressed his system, appealed in some measure to reason and to scientific habits of mind. But "blood and soil"? How does one bring intelligence to bear on so blank a phrase? What, if anything, do the words signify? What referents do they have in the world of space and time? What does it mean, for instance, to have "Aryan" rather than "non-Aryan" blood coursing through one's veins? Physiologically, what is the difference? No one knows.

But in fairness to the Nazis, they would hasten to point out that national socialism was not an affair of the brain but of the breast, not a matter of reason but of affect. "National socialism," one of its champions observed, "cannot be grasped intellectually. Whoever does not feel that the National Socialist idea is correct will never comprehend it. But on the other hand, he who has become a National Socialist in his heart will also come to understand by himself in the course of time the intellectual basis of the National Socialist world of ideas [*Gedankenwelt*]."[25]

But of nazism one remembers not so much its vacuous "ideas" as its odious images: clenched fists, clicking heels, goose-stepping columns, the death's-head, the swastika, the *Panzer* tank, the *Stuka* dive-bomber. Such images excite fury, hatred, and horror: they do not awaken thought. As far as the Nazis were concerned, thought belonged to the decadent and doomed world of democracy and "cultural Bolshevism." It was to have no place in the Third Reich and its language.

Language and Domination

I have dwelt at some length on the Nazis' aversion to thought and intellect because I believe it is the key to understanding their use of language. My reasoning runs thus: The Nazis sought to set up a totalitarian command state. Such a state thrives upon subjects with a low level of consciousness. Language to a large extent may determine consciousness. Therefore the Nazis needed to control it—to tamper with words, as it were, in order to reduce mental energies to something like a state of thermodynamic equilibrium. That is to say, they sought to breed a type of citizen who, partly because of his constant exposure to the emotional and manipulative rhetoric of the Party and his addiction to dogmas and catchwords, would never—could never—exert himself to think critically about the regime and the manner of society it was creating. Presumably a long season of slogan shouting would have atrophied his intellect. If I reason aright

in all of this, then certain otherwise inexplicable features of Nazi rhetoric begin to make sense.

Nowhere did the Nazis advertise in so many words their intention of using language to bridle the brain. Yet their deeds clearly bore witness to the aim. A government or a political party bent on controlling thought by controlling language would need to cordon off all major avenues to the mind; none but the official or party language must reach the cerebral centers of the person whose thought is being controlled. If, therefore, the Nazis intended to use language manipulatively, we should expect them at the very least to have attacked and taken over as far as possible all the outlets for public expression and the conveyance of ideas in Germany.

This is exactly what they did. Before 1933, in the so-called time of struggle (*Kampfzeit*), they tried through superior propaganda and tactics of intimidation to dominate public discourse. After acceding to power, moreover, they dammed up competing channels of information and opinion. They rid themselves of rival political parties, for instance, and suppressed dissent by force and terror. They abolished free trade unions and nazified all professional societies. They turned the nation's schools into vehicles for teaching the worldview and the jargon of the National Socialist movement. And, knowing full well the advantages of monopolizing the means of mass communication, they issued a series of edicts subjecting the press, radio, and cinema to government supervision.

To carry out this "synchronization" (*Gleichschaltung*) of the mass media, the Nazis created in March 1933 the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment (*Volksaufklärung*) and Propaganda. On this agency, whose main job, as Hitler put it, was to influence "the mental and spiritual life of the nation," they bestowed broad powers.[26] Originally the ministry contained five departments; by 1941 these had multiplied to seventeen. This bureaucratic creature cast its tentacles everywhere. Art, music, literature, film, theater, radio, publishing—no sphere of German culture lay beyond its reach. It granted and could readily revoke or withhold the licenses of journalists and publishers. It could deny to authors the right to practice their craft. Often it dictated to newsmen the slant their stories would take and sometimes even the precise words and phrases they were to use or refrain from using in their reportage and commentary.[27]

To manage the ministry Hitler appointed his peerless propaganda genius, Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels. Not surprisingly, this supremely cynical man shared most of Hitler's sentiments about the language of propaganda. He believed, for instance, as did the author of *Mein*

Kampf, in the efficacy of propaganda words that appeal to feeling and instinct rather than to reason, are employed repetitively to make a few simple points, and are targeted not at intellectuals but at the least intelligent segments of the body politic. Language, like propaganda, Goebbels contended, is a means to the end of dictatorial governance; for those who would wield total power it has become "an instrument of struggle [*Kampfmittel*] in our time,"[28] which is another way of saying it assists in leading, dominating, and regimenting the masses. As his diaries and the minutes of his wartime ministerial conferences reveal, the propaganda minister ascribed to words an almost occult power to move the masses and alter their perception of reality. A failed novelist, Goebbels was nonetheless a shrewd wordsman, and among Party members his impact upon the language of national socialism, and upon German in general, was second only to Hitler's. Indeed, upon his skill and ingenuity in shaping the language of public discourse depended in a great degree the success of the whole Nazi experiment in thought control.[29]

The Party, then, or so we can infer from its determined attempts to command the means of mass communication in Germany, was resolved to make itself keeper of the word and controller of thought. To be sure, no definitive statement by Party officials directly corroborates this—nothing, at any rate, beyond a few random remarks by Hitler and Goebbels and one or two of their lieutenants. Distrusting systematic knowledge as much as they did, the Nazis never troubled themselves to spin out an elaborate linguistic theory explaining the connection between language and thought and rationalizing the regulation of both. No doubt from the Nazi point of view a theory of language, if there was to be one at all, would have to arise spontaneously out of experience and action; rhetorical practice, one might say, would simultaneously create and confirm the theory.[30] To Nazi rhetorical practice, therefore—to the content and texture of language and the particular ways in which the Party employed it—we must turn if we would wholly discern the reason behind the rhetoric.

CHAPTER THREE

FEATURES OF A "FANATICAL" LANGUAGE

We have now to consider several features of National Socialist language. These are not the only notable ones by any means, but they are probably the most important and the most manifest. They include what I call emotionalism, "xenologophilia," dynamism, monumentalism, dehumanization, brutality, militarization, Manichaeanism, name-calling, camouflage, and euphemism. In addition to these features, I discuss in chapter 4 the practices of "semanticide" and "logocide."

But first a cautionary comment. In the pages to follow I present a rather ideal description of Nazi language. At times it may appear there was more consistency in its application and less disappointment in its results than was actually the case. Just why the Party in its quest to control language met with frustration is a matter we must take up in a later chapter. For the time being it is enough to note that the ideal and the reality never quite coincided.

Emotionalism and Counterfeit Faith

The Nazis valued mass hysteria, and the *Führer* required of his *Volk* an unreflecting fervor and loyalty: mindless emotion and not reason would have to govern its collective soul. Such was the goal; and to achieve it the Nazis enlisted the aid of language. Used ritualistically in mass meetings, on radio, and (with less dramatic results) in printed propaganda, words acquired almost magical power to excite the enthusiasm and passions of the populace. Emotional effects mattered more than meanings; in Nazi rhetorical pyrotechnics the sounds of words were more than equal to their sense.

Consider the tribalist terms that saturated the spoken and written language of the Third Reich. When two Nazis agreed on something, they did not simply think alike; they were sometimes said to be "of the same mind and blood." The phrase meant little more than that they saw eye to eye; and yet for those who subscribed to Nazi teachings, the injection of "blood" added an indefinable sense of fraternity and comradery. The same was true of words like *Volksgemeinschaft* (folk community) and *Volksgenosse* (folk or racial comrade). *Volksgemeinschaft* really meant society or nation, and *Landsmann* (countryman) or *Staatsbürger* (citizen) could have stood for *Volksgenosse* without loss of literal meaning. But by continually using "community," "folk," "comrade," and the like, one could arouse emotions missing in the more prosaic words. Indeed, by mixing these *völkisch* terms with the blood-and-soil imagery of such expressions as "the German soul," one could create a whole emotional sublanguage, a vocabulary of the antirational. In an age when industry and technology, the impoverishment of rural life, and the teachings of science and rationalism had ruptured many of the ties that once bound human beings to one another, many people yearned after a simpler existence and the lost sense of community. In word, at least, the Nazis offered them these things. Their language of blood and soil conjured the image of a mystical racial bond uniting Germans of all stations in a great historical community in which classes closed ranks and the "sacred collective egoism" supplanted the egoism of the individual. But in reality such language, for all the responsive chords it must have struck in persons of goodwill, had the ulterior purpose of making more palatable the imposition of total control on a nation still ridden with antagonistic class distinctions.[1]

The revival of archaic expressions, so popular with Alfred Rosenberg and his admirers, reinforced the false sense of community and historical destiny. Best remembered of these expressions, perhaps,

are *Heil* and *Reich*, but there were many more. A *Mädchen* (young girl), for instance, became in Nazi parlance a *Maid* (maiden) or *Mädel* (lass); a *Jungmädel* was a female member of the Hitler Youth, and an *Arbeitsmaid* (literally a maiden of labor) was a female member of the Reich Labor Service. Place and occupational names often took archaic twists as well. Instead of calling Germany's political and territorial districts *Provinzen*, for example, the Nazis called them *Gaue*, and the governor of each a *Gauleiter*. *Österreich* (Austria) gave way, for a while at least, to *Ostmark*. A *Beamter* (official) became an *Amtswalter*, a *Jurist* (lawyer) a *Rechtswahrer*, and a *Redakteuer* (editor) a *Schriftwalter*.[2]

No practical necessity obliged the Party to revive these obsolete forms of speech, but it was good politics to resuscitate them. They could be used to draw out of the populace, especially the conservative peasantry with its collective memory of Teutonic antiquity, certain powerful emotions. With archaic expressions it was possible, for instance, to appeal to patriotism and pride in Germany's past and, by sometimes representing the Hitler regime as a restoration of that past, to surround the Third Reich with a sanctifying aura of tradition and history. Archaic words often enter into the magical incantations of primitive peoples, and it may well be that through archaism the Nazi party, or at least the Rosenberg section of it, was trying to cast a sort of emotional spell over the German nation: a spell conducive to self-renouncing dedication to the *Volk* community. Incidentally, these sometimes high-sounding words also acted as euphemisms. To portray Hitler as the duke of his kingdom (*Herzog seines Reiches*), as did Alfred Rosenberg, conveyed the image not of a tyrant but of a goateed aristocrat ruling in the spirit of noblesse oblige.[3]

Archaic and tribalist expressions played effectively upon the passions of men and women. Perhaps the most emotionally potent words, however, were those that the Nazis purloined from the Christian religion. "It is more difficult," Hitler affirmed, "to undermine faith than knowledge."[4] He therefore strove to make of nazism a secular faith which would triumph over all enemies. At the same time, he and his followers couched the message of the new faith in the language of the old. This theft of traditional Christian terminology by pagans prompted the complaint of Pope Pius XI in his famous encyclical letter of 1937, *Mit brennender Sorge*: "If they do not want to be Christians, at least they should forego enriching the vocabulary of their unbelief from the Christian treasure of ideas."[5] Such criticism failed to deter the Nazis. Without shame and without regard for the original meanings, they availed themselves of words like "miracle,"

"creed," and "eternal life," debasing these ancient and venerable concepts in the service of political messianism. As usual Hitler, who was known to close especially emotional speeches with a breathless "Amen," had set an example in *Mein Kampf*. That "holy book" of national socialism teems with religious phraseology: "resurrection of our people," "most sacred sacrifice," "salvation of a struggling Aryan humanity."[6]

The new faith partook freely of the names and symbols of the old. Thus Goebbels called the Nazi party "a political church," its members "the political pastors of our people," its mass meetings "the divine services of our political work"; its dogmas were a "Gospel" and a "teaching of eternal life."[7] Nazism also had its "martyrs," the sixteen Party comrades who died in the beer-hall *Putsch* and whose blood became the Movement's "water of baptism."[8] These martyrs to the new faith had not sacrificed their lives in vain, for their death pointed toward the rebirth of the nation that would take place in "the eternal German Reich."[9]

And to whom did the coming kingdom belong? To the *Führer*, who, rhetorically at any rate, united in his person all the attributes of divinity. Which member of the godhead he embodied, however, was not always clear. The Reich minister of church affairs, Hanns Kerrl, called him "the true Holy Ghost," but to the Hitler Youth he was "our Savior and Intercessor."[10] The idolatries were carried to crude lengths, of which the following statement in the party mouthpiece, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, in 1941 serves as a sample:

> If thou knowest [*du weißt*] one thing of a surety, it is this: thou canst tell everything to the *Führer*, and he will always understand. But there is a second thing of which thou shouldst be as certain: thou canst not in anything deceive him, for he can see into thy heart. . . . Where thou wast neglectful, the *Führer* has taken upon himself thy share of duty; where thou didst take thine ease he has borne thy share of toil and sacrifice . . . . Can we imagine a Germany without the *Führer*? . . . When his name is sounded, history is swallowed up, for he has gathered all German history in himself. He is the soul of Germany made flesh [*fleischgewordene deutsche Wesen*].[11]

"Made flesh." Comparisons of Hitler with Christ occur too frequently in Nazi films and literature to have lacked design. For example, in Leni Riefenstahl's famous propaganda production of 1934, *Triumph of the Will*, the viewer sees Hitler descend from the clouds in an airplane upon Nuremberg, where throngs of people hail him

like believers welcoming the archangel at the rapture. Everywhere Hitler ventures in the city he seems shrouded by light. Riefenstahl's camera caught him in a motorcade, for instance, arm cocked in half salute, sunlight reflecting from his palm; the radiation might almost emanate from Hitler himself. Satan has been transformed into an angel of light. Party spokesmen did their utmost to nurture the myth of Hitler as messiah, supplementing with verbal imagery the visual impressions of the screen and the mass rally. "And then unto us was born a child in Braunau," Rudolf Hess reverently recounted, cribbing a line from the Book of Isaiah. "We believe," Robert Ley testified, "that there is one Lord God in Heaven who has created us, who leads us, who controls us and who visibly blesses us. And we believe that this Lord God has sent Adolf Hitler to us to establish Germany for all eternity."[12]

Hitler did nothing to discourage this kind of talk. Indeed, he indulged in it himself, referring to his followers as "the chosen" and to his Party comrades slain in the Munich uprising as "my apostles." In a commemorative service for the latter he apostrophized: "You have risen in the Third Reich." To the German people he cried, in language reminiscent of Luther's New Testament: *Ich habe dich glauben gelehrt, jetzt gib mir deinen Glauben!*—"I have taught thee to believe, now give me thy belief!"[13] But Hitler and his mythmakers were not Christians. Quite the contrary: an unbridgeable chasm divided the old faith from the new. The Bible and Christianity, Hitler charged, were part of a "Jewish swindle" and altogether incompatible with national socialism. Once the war ended, he prophesied, his "life's final task" would be "to solve the religious problem"—presumably not by bloodless methods.[14]

But these were private remarks. In public it paid at times to talk piously, holding one's rage in reserve until the Church could be smashed with impunity and without serious political repercussions. For the language of Christianity lent legitimacy to the regime in the minds of people ill-disposed toward racialism and nihilism but easily duped into accepting national socialism as old Christian wine in a new bottle. Amid the uncertainties and the soullessness of modern life, the words of faith fell upon ears eager for messages of deliverance and salvation. Religious terminology also enabled the Nazis to justify brutality and repression. "By warding off the Jews," Hitler claimed, "I am fighting for the Lord's work."[15] What righteous person would oppose policies sanctioned by the Almighty? Most important of all, religious language stoked the emotions of mindless fealty and devotion that sustained the government during its worst tribulations. As

late as April 1945, with the Reich in ruins and Hitler about to press a pistol to his lip, some Germans, even now under the spell of Goebbels's propaganda, believed the *Führer* would confound his enemies with one last "miracle."[16] Such is the power of language for delusion.

Xenologophilia (Affection for Foreign Words)

Given their predilection for archaic terms, one might expect the Nazis, out of racial and nationalist considerations, to have shunned foreign ones. Actually they relished them. Hitler, for instance, scoffed at German language purists, using in *Mein Kampf*, according to one count, as many as 700 foreign words.[17] Among those habitually barked out in Nazi oratory were *Dynamik*, *Instinkt*, *Idee*, *Garant* (guarantor), *Agitation*, *Paladin*, *heroisch*, *total*, and *fanatisch*. These words, generally employed in a positive sense, turned up in almost every Nazi speech. Others, equally recurrent but having negative connotations, included *Aggressor*, *Invasor* (invader), *System*, *Pazifismus*, *Plutokratie*, *infam* (infamous), *diffamieren* (defame), and *diskriminieren* (discriminate).[18]

No doubt it tickled the egos of self-taught Nazis like Hitler to be spouting terms of this sort. But other motives as well animated them in their fondness for imported expressions. For example, these words came in handy in haranguing crowds. How many German plebeians and peasants knew the meaning of *diffamieren*? Very few, most likely; and for that reason the word, shouted in high decibels by a Hitler or a Goebbels, might well awe them. The homegrown *schlechtmachen* would not impress them nearly so much; they knew its meaning. Many of the favored foreign words, moreover, unlike most German words, were accented upon the second or third syllable. A deft demagogue, sprinkling his speech with iambic-meter phrases like *Garant der Zukunft* (guarantor of the future), could well nigh hypnotize his audience.[19] At the very least, the rhythm of his words and inflection of his voice could divert attention from the substance—or lack of substance—of his rhetoric. In other words, it could stifle thought.

Dynamism and the Lure of Novelty

At one level Nazi language is a language of the irresistible force. Many of its words suggest rapid motion and dynamism. Among these may be numbered the compounds coined from *Blitz* (lightning) and

Sturm (storm or assault), including the well-known *Blitzkrieg* (lightning war) and *Sturm-Abteilung* (Storm Detachment or Brownshirts: the SA). The *Sturm* words in particular connote a blind, agitated, forward-surging energy, precisely the kind that revolutionary armies and cadres require for their success.

There were innumerable other dynamic expressions in the National Socialist lexicon. For instance, the Nazis insisted on calling their Party a *Bewegung* or movement; never standing still, it rolled relentlessly onward toward nowhere in particular but bruising anybody who barred its path. Members of the Movement, being of the Nordic breed, brimmed with a "faustian, dynamic life-force [*Lebensgefühl*]," and members and Movement alike were driven by the "revolutionary dynamic of a new idea."[20] The use of "new" in this phrase is more than casual, for in spite of feigning affection for the past, the Nazis saw themselves as innovators and founders of a radical new order. In speech after speech Hitler and Goebbels hailed the coming of "the new State," "the new man," "the new mode of thought."[21] *Macht Platz, ihr Alten*—"Make way, you old ones," cried Gregor Strasser, hater of bourgeois values, herald of the National Socialist brave new world, in appealing to "restless" German youth of the Weimar era.[22] Every revolutionary against an established order and its values poses as a partisan of the new, the young, and the energetic against the old, the doddering, and the antiquated. The old, he asserts—and many of a more moderate temperament will agree with him—must forever yield to the new, to the "wave of the future." By convincing the masses that he represents the future, the revolutionary convinces them at the same time that his movement must triumph, that it is an overpowering and irreversible current in the *Geschichtsfluß* or flow of history. So it was with the Nazis. While portraying their democratic enemies as "fossils of the present time,"[23] they portrayed themselves as men of the future. Many people believed them.

Collectively, terms like "new," "flow," and "dynamic," as used by the Nazis, had three purposes. First, they were supposed to inspire the faithful with confidence in the Party and spur them into unreasoning and perhaps even suicidal action on its behalf.[24] "History" was on their side; the individual might perish, but through the triumph of the Movement he or she would at least partake of collective immortality. Second, these "irresistible force" terms were supposed to prod the timid and the wavering in the same direction as "History"—that is, to cow them into submission to the Party and state. Third, they were supposed to intimidate outright enemies. On opponents of the regime such language, drummed day and night over the airwaves,

poured onto the pages of periodicals and newspapers year in and year out, and backed by bold and cruel deeds, could have a demoralizing effect. Confronted with the unstoppable steamroller portrayed in Nazi propaganda, one seemed to have only two choices: submit and be swept along with the Movement or stand in its way and be flattened.

Monumentalism in Nazi Rhetoric and Jargon

Anybody bombarded unremittingly by Nazi propaganda must often have felt as did Lemuel Gulliver at the feet of Brobdingnagia's giants: overwhelmed and overawed by forces irresistible and objects immovable. We have just been tracing in Nazi rhetoric the path of the irresistible force. We have now to encounter the immovable object.

"Monumentalist" expressions suggest not so much motion as a stifling stability and an immeasurable magnitude. To this category belongs a large group of words which, as Heinz Paechter observed, describe in Nazi usage "the dependence of man upon his race or destiny."[25] In this group are *bedingt* (conditioned), *bestimmt* (determined or predestined), and *Gesetz* (law, but used in a sense synonymous with destiny). These, combined with words like *Schicksal* (Destiny or Fate), *Notwendigkeit* (necessity), and *Natur* (Nature), evoked the image of an individual devoid of free will and frozen into one spot in an unchangeable cosmic pattern, a single tile in a Byzantine mosaic. *Mein Kampf* abounds with phrases like "revenge of inscrutable destiny," "brazen law of necessity," "Fate's hammer stroke," "iron logic of Nature." "I begged repeatedly that Destiny be given free rein and our movement allowed a chance to settle with Marxism," Hitler wrote, and from this one may infer that "Destiny" and the will of the Leader were the same thing.[26] At any rate, what diminutive mortal would dare defy all these "inscrutable" powers—or the dictatorship—that had planted him in his place? Neither Fate nor Nature could be budged.

A special class of monumentalist terms consists of acronyms and blend-words. It is true that modern technology in both democratic and nondemocratic societies tends of its own accord to generate contracted or "telegraphed" expressions. Names such as ConEd, Nabisco, Amtrak, hi-tech, and Dictaphone are probably unavoidable by-products of industrialism and the impatient pace of life in the twentieth century. But certain of the Nazi contractions amounted to something more than just harmless shorthand terms. Gestapo for

Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police), Promi for Propaganda Ministry, DAF for *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* (German Labor Front), SS, SA—these and other abbreviations came to symbolize for ordinary Germans the mammoth bureaucracy that towered over them and regimented their lives from birth to burial. (See appendix B.)

The mere sight and sound of some of these expressions could strike terror in the stoutest of hearts and, in fact, were meant to do exactly that. Such was the case with *SS*. One almost never heard the unabbreviated *Schutz-Staffel*. Always it was "the SS"; and in print as well as on the official insignia, the double-S appeared as runic characters resembling twin bolts of lightning. There even went out a decree that manufacturers of typewriters must redesign them to include a key with the double-runic letters.[27] Since many people knew or suspected that under cover of those two jagged capitals lay a gruesome reality, there grew up around the abbreviation a mystique of terror. Whether encountered in public communications or whispered within locked and shuttered habitations, *SS*—the term, almost as much as what it stood for—could paralyze a person with fear and panic.

To their penchant for acronyms and abbreviations the Nazis added a passion for superlative expressions and overstatement. Such adjectives as "colossal," "unprecedented," and "total" pervade the literature of national socialism, projecting the images of an awesome Nazi state and an invincible revolutionary movement. Quite apart from any propaganda purpose, however, these terms appear to have been used for their own sake; something in the Nazi mentality caused them to gush forth spontaneously from the pen or the throat of a Hitler or a Goering. *Mein Kampf*, for example, betrays its author's obsession with extravagant statement; phrases like "unprecedented betrayal" and "boundless wretchedness" appear throughout the book.[28] Hitler's language, like his architectural schemes and his appetite for power, knew nothing of restraint.

Some Nazi superlatives, such as "the greatest war criminal of all times" (Franklin Roosevelt) and "most infamous villainy of world history" (the German revolution of 1918), maligned the Movement's enemies.[29] Others—and these in many ways are the more interesting—glorified the *Führerstaat* and its institutions. To hear Hitler talk, or to scan the pages of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, one would have thought Nazi Germany enjoyed the biggest, best, and most abundant of all things good. It boasted the best-equipped army, the best work force, the greatest bridge, the greatest seaside resort. Its citizens, exhibiting "unprecedented loyalty" to their Leader and inspired by his "incomparable successes and achievements," were praised for standing "100 percent behind" the Nazi movement.[30] From their ranks would

rise new Party members, men and women of "limitless idealism," for literally "hundreds of thousands of years" to come.[31]

During the war, naturally, German soldiers proved "unprecedentedly strong and positively unconquerable." They had to be so, for they were waging "superhuman" struggles in a world arena. Seemingly every engagement fought in the war's early phases was depicted in the Nazi press as "the greatest battle of world history" or, at the very least, a "battle of annihilation [*Vernichtungsschlacht*] of world-historical proportion." Never mind if the *Wehrmacht* sometimes "annihilated" the same enemy more than once. In the first months of fighting on the eastern front, the authors of German army communiqués gloated over the encirclement and capture of hundreds of thousands of Soviet soldiers; later they stopped pretending to count and raved about "unimaginable" numbers of the enemy taken prisoner.[32] Strict facts and straight reporting seldom sufficed for a Nazi publicist.

Indeed, no scale that encompassed less than the whole planet or less than the sum of human experience could satisfy Hitler's spokesmen. Ordinary Party rallies became in Nazi discourse "historic" occasions. A meeting between Hitler and Mussolini was a "world-historical hour." The opening of a new government agency was announced as an "event without precedent in the history of all peoples and ages." A speech by a Party member—just about any Nazi notable would do—was routinely characterized as "monumental," while an oration by *der Führer* went down in Nazi annals as "one of the greatest human documents of all ages."[33]

Superlative rhetoric ran away with the regime, as the example of "total" illustrates. At first used mostly in the phrase "total state," it soon became a catchword. Party enthusiasts talked of attaining a "total *Volksgemeinschaft*," of "total politics" as a means to "total revolution," of "total war" as the route to "total peace." The Party expected from its members a "total commitment" to the cause, and commentators in the press assessed the "total educational situation" in a school. Even the general populace acquired the habit of thoughtlessly using the word; the philologist Victor Klemperer, for example, recalled seeing a display in a store window advertising "the total game." Finally the word ceased to signify anything at all, as when "total" mobilizations for the war were followed by "super-total" ones, or when Dr. Goebbels asked an audience of Party faithful in 1943: "Do you want total war? Do you want it, if necessary, altogether more total and more radical than we can even imagine?"[34]

Why the wild rhetoric? Probably the superlative style in totalitarian discourse stems from the all-or-nothing nature of totalitarian-

ism itself, which seems incapable of recognizing relative degrees of comparison and consistently paints a two-tone image of the world. Perhaps, too, it reflects the insecurity and absence of moderation in the souls of tyrannical types. One thinks of Stalin with his stilted boots and Hitler, the failed artist, with his plans to rebuild Berlin on a titanic scale. Neither of these supersalesmen of dictatorship ever lacked for exorbitant language.

Yet the superlative style was more than pure bombast and the infantile braggadocio of dictators. The Nazis were able to make political capital out of it. As part of their monumentalist vocabulary, superlatives magnified the size and muscle of the Movement even as they reduced the individual to Lilliputian proportions by comparison. For many people, followers and foes alike, the constant clatter about "endless brown columns" and "broad masses" must have depressed the spirit.[35] What was one man or woman among eighty millions? Life, it seemed, could have no significance apart from the great collective and the Nazi Leviathan. Bow down to them, therefore; fall in step with the brown columns and merge with the mass, or face the melancholy consequences! This, or something like it, was the message underlying superlative language. Doubtless it presented an imposing picture—and a distorted one. For to keep the public eye riveted upon "colossal achievements" and "gigantic projects," however imaginary those might be, had the advantage of diverting attention at least temporarily from the actual impoverishment of life under the swastika. Superlative rhetoric was a blemish cream smeared to excess on the face of Hitler's Germany.

Dehumanization of Man and Language

If the National Socialist state was towering, its citizens were tiny; and not only tiny but rather less than human—at least in the language of national socialism.

Nazi literature often characterized human beings as brute matter awaiting the constructive work of a master craftsman. "Masses are unformed stuff," wrote Goebbels. "Only in the hands of the political artists do the masses become a people and the people a nation." Hitler had another term for this "stuff": the masses were *Menschenmaterial* (human material) that the Movement had to win over and subject to "a most comprehensive reshaping."[36] *Menschenmaterial* was only one among many dehumanizing expressions in the National Socialist lexicon. In Nazi locution the masses could be tempered like steel, in-

corporated like territory, charged like batteries, or synchronized like watches or stoplights. They could be forged into instruments of state policy or fed like raw material (*Rohstoff*) into the Party's "kneading machine," from which they emerged as a "molded mass" ready for political action.[37] Furthermore, every German was said to act as a *Träger* or carrier of the folkish idea, an unfree agent blindly doing the bidding of Fate or of some other transcendent force.[38]

Such terms as *Material* and *Träger* applied no less to members of the Movement, even its leaders, than to the masses at large. Thus the Hitler Youth sang of themselves:

> *We are all steel and iron*
> *We are all prime material*[39]

while Hitler declared that the folkish state must select for government service the "human material that is evidently favored by Nature."[40] Hitler himself was said to be a *Träger* of the "folkish will," and Goebbels, varying the metaphor, more than once likened him to a storage battery which had "charged the entire nation" with power.[41] If it seems paradoxical that leaders of the master race should have portrayed themselves and their followers in such degrading terms, one must remember what sort of qualities the Nazis deemed desirable in a person. What made the Aryan race superior was not the possession of peculiarly human qualities such as wisdom or goodwill but rather its endowment with essentially inhuman qualities such as rock-like strength and iron resolve. These latter are more the virtues of spiritless matter than of men.

Because in their language they lowered themselves and their racial comrades to the level of raw material, it was necessary for the Nazis to speak of their enemies in terms even more degrading. Accordingly, Frenchmen in concentration camps were contemptuously regarded as "dogs," and Soviet soldiers who defeated German forces at Stalingrad and elsewhere were branded bogmen (*Sumpfmenschen*) by Hitler and "mechanized robots" by Goebbels.[42] Slavs in general were considered subhumans (*Untermenschen*), and Bolsheviks in particular made up, in Rosenberg's phrase referring to German Communists, a "red subhumanity [*Untermenschentum*]."[43]

"Subhumanity" applied even more emphatically to Jews. Compared to other names the Nazis called them, in public and in private, it was generous. More often they were "sows," "vermin," or "international maggots and bedbugs" (*Völkermaden und Völkerwanzen*).[44] To expel the Jews from German schools or to banish them from a

territory made those places *judenfrei* (free of Jews), much as spraying a house rids it of roaches. The Nazis took their talk about pests quite seriously. Why else would they build extermination stations (*Vernichtungsstellen*) at Auschwitz and Dachau? Why else would the commandant of Auschwitz describe his camp as "the greatest human extermination centre [*Menschen-Vernichtungs-Anlage*] in all time"?[45]

Sows and pests at least belonged to the animal kingdom. In Nazi German, however, Jews sometimes sank to the level of parasites or lower. Hitler, a man who took pity upon starving mice and reportedly wept at the death of his pet canary, nevertheless could attempt without any remorse to expunge what he variously called "the Jewish virus," the "eternal fission-fungus of mankind," and "a parasite in the body of other peoples."[46] Goebbels denounced Jewry as a world plague (*Weltpest*), and Julius Streicher's anti-Semitic weekly, *Der Stürmer*, recommended drastic measures to render the Jews "innocuous."[47]

Other Nazis preferred to think of Jews as inanimate matter. In official records one reads, for instance, that the deportation of Jews from western and Central Europe took place by "installments" and that extermination camps kept on hand "stores" or "stocks" of Jews. Such words express what became in some sense a literal truth: Jews and other despised races were handled like commodities. Thus an SS general calculated to the mark the profit value of a concentration-camp inmate, a craftsman fashioned a pocket knife from human bone and labeled it "genuine Jew," and some of the ashes of Auschwitz's victims wound up on the local market as fertilizer.[48]

Not by accident or instinct alone did the Nazis strip away the dignity of men and women with words. They did it deliberately. For by conditioning Germans through language to think of themselves as depersonalized agents of the folkish state, the Nazis were trying, with considerable success, to instill in them an attitude of brutish obedience which would prove useful to the regime. An extreme case in point, the commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Hoess, described himself as "a cog in the wheel of the great extermination machine created by the Third Reich"—which was another way of saying he had long since abjured thinking and responsibility for his actions. Hannah Arendt observed a similar attitude in Adolf Eichmann at his trial.[49]

Dehumanizing expressions had other uses as well. By depicting people—friend and enemy alike—as soulless entities, the Nazis made it easier to act with inhumanity toward them. To send lightly armed old men and boys into battle against Russian tanks, as Hitler commanded in the war's final weeks, was no unconscionable matter if one

counted them, or if they counted themselves, as mere "human material." Ghastly "medical" experiments, such as administering fatal injections to Jews or implanting pieces of glass in the calves of Polish women, had their justification as well, provided Jews and Poles were merely *Untermenschen*. The dehumanizing jargon of national socialism, together with a good deal of cognitive dissonance, might well have convinced some Germans that these wretches were indeed past the pale of humanity. In fine, the language of dehumanization abridged their consciousness of reality.

Brutality of the Tongue

At the core of Western liberalism lies the conviction—perhaps it is little more than an unexamined faith—that human beings by nature are benevolent and rational. If all too often they act irrational and vicious, if on occasion they stoop to slashing one another's throats or infringing one another's natural rights, it is only because ages of ignorance and superstition have corrupted them. Give them a republican constitution and the right to vote, or compulsory education and free trade, or a world government, or some other long-overdue reform, and reason will finally reign and the dawn of "perpetual peace" arrive. That at least has been the belief of progressive lights from Locke to Kant to Cobden; and it remains, in spite of a bad beating from the twentieth century, a major canon of the liberal creed.

The Nazis rejected this belief along with every other tenet of liberalism. Far from yearning for peace and goodwill, humanity, they taught, craves brutality and violence. "The great masses are only a part of nature," Hitler asserted, and "what they want is the victory of the stronger and the annihilation or the unconditional surrender of the weaker." Let humanitarians and pacifists prattle about love and kindness; the initiated know that most people respect "nothing but brutal strength and ruthlessness."[50] Pent up within the average person—and Nazis were not alone in believing this—are powerful aggressive impulses held in check solely by the conventions of civil social life. Through inflammatory language the Nazis sought to liberate these instincts and channel them toward enemies of the Movement; violence and violent language were to be engines of the National Socialist revolution.[51]

Nazi German was an exceptionally savage tongue. The ubiquity in National Socialist literature of two dozen or so adjectives suggestive of violence and sadism proves the point. "Ruthless" (*rück-*

sichtslos), "fanatical," "brutal," "brazen" (*ehern*), "tough," "hard," "granite," "inflexible" (*unbeugsam*), "relentless" (*unerbittlich*), and "iron" (*eisern*) were perhaps the most popular of those words. And for every violent adjective there was an equally violent verb. From the pages of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, for instance, especially during the war, readers learned again and again that various hostile "elements" had been "finally finished off," "extinguished" (*ausgelöscht*), "mercilessly annihilated" (*unbarmherzig vernichtet*), "cut down" (*niedergemacht*), or "exterminated."[52] To all these terms, verbs and adjectives alike, nazism often attached a positive value, for they defined in part the character of a good German. That is to say, a "fanatical" member of the Party or a loyal citizen of the Third Reich was expected to cultivate a "brazen heart" and an "iron will," to hurl himself at an enemy "relentlessly," to hold his position on the battlefield "inflexibly," to be brutal enough to bash in a face or "finish off" a foe for the *Führer*. And Nazi rhetoric, with its frequent coarseness and its appeal to criminal passions, kept him mindful of the need for callousness and cruelty if the old bourgeois order of Europe was to be overthrown and a new one, with Germany triumphant and dominant, was to take its place.

Hence Hitler celebrated the "brutal worship of the blackjack" and the "brutal recklessness" of SA guards at mass meetings who dealt out fistic deserts to Communist hecklers. Page upon page of *Mein Kampf* features phrases like "ruthless application of Nature's brazen laws" and "steel-hard will power."[53] Even when Hitler referred to nonviolent actions, he often used violent language in describing them. The brutal idiom of *Mein Kampf* is typical of Nazi polemics. To be sure, such language reflects the fierce natures of the men who ruled the Third Reich. But it was more than merely the offspring of violent times and temperaments; it also begot them. By matching word with deed, by talking brutally while giving people every incentive to be brutal, the Party was attempting to remake the German masses in the image of Attila, to impart a character every bit as brazen as the language suggested. This would enable the regime at the appropriate moments to unleash rabid emotions, venting them on the Poles, the British, the Jews, or the Russians while keeping Germans too consumed with rage to reflect on the failures and shortcomings of national socialism.

Equally important, the Nazis intended through the rhetoric of ruthlessness to harden people for the massive cruelties contemplated by the regime.[54] Someone would have to fire the furnaces of Dachau, shoot innocent women and children, torture alleged conspirators against the regime. Those who were to play these grim parts in some

measure had been prepared for their roles well in advance by the language of brutality. The Party had murdered its enemies figuratively long before murdering them in fact.

The Militarization of Speech

Like many revolutionary groups, only more so than most, the Nazis regarded themselves as a militant movement. The Party, with its paramilitary units, shock troops, uniforms, flags, and roll calls, resembled an army more than a political organization. In a sense it was an army, for the Nazis looked upon the whole of life, including partisan politics, as an arena of combat or struggle (*Kampf*). Partly for this reason they packed their speech with military expressions, no matter if what they were talking about had little to do with tanks or troops. In the 1930s the Nazis did not offer peace proposals to the Western powers: they launched "peace offensives." They did not socialize the German economy: they "conquered" the old economic system. They did not force German schools, scholars, artists, or families to adopt a National Socialist outlook: they made them *ausrichten* or straighten up their ranks.[55]

For the Nazis, as for the Social Darwinists before them, to exist was to struggle. *Kampf* assumed a wide variety of forms, some more absurd than others, and all were mirrored in Nazi discourse: a "production struggle," a "struggle for German *Lebensraum*," even a "nutrition struggle" (*der Diätenkampf*).[56] Moreover, the struggle raged along many unusual "fronts," including the diplomatic front, the home front, the labor front, the legal front (*Rechtsfront*); there was even a "two-front war against corruption."[57] At any given moment on each of these and other "fronts," the Party or the nation might be fighting a fierce battle (*Schlacht*), often with weapons other than warships and machine guns. With knives, clubs, and fists, for instance, the SA in the 1920s fought many a lecture-hall battle (*Saalschlacht*) with political rivals.[58] Long before the guns of September 1939 commenced to thunder, the German nation under Nazi rule had fought a battle for autarchy, a grain battle, a battle against mice, a battle against unemployment (*Arbeitsschlacht*). To multiply the number of citizens available for future military service, it had even begun fighting a battle of the cradle (*Geburtenschlacht*), the outcome of which, the leadership hoped, would be a victory of the cradle (*Geburtensieg*)—that is, the proliferation of the Aryan race to the detriment of its enemies.[59]

Two other military terms that did political duty were *Marsch* and *marschieren*, the noun and verb forms of "march." With Himmler, Goebbels, and the lead writers of *Das Reich* and the *Völkischer Beobachter*, these catchwords were almost as popular as terms like *Volk* and *Kampf*: "march henceforth into a great new future of our life," "a defiant nation will finally march into the young morning of a thousand-year Reich," "an entire *Volk* stands ready to step behind the government and begin with it the march into a better future."[60] Note that much of this marching is toward nothing more definite than "the future." As Alfred Rosenberg explained in *Gestaltung der Idee*, the "style of living" of the German nation was "the style of a marching column, no matter where or to what end this marching column may be directed."[61] From the Party's point of view the important thing was not to "get somewhere"—for that would bring the "Movement" to a halt—but to keep the masses in perpetual motion. A human object at rest might detach itself from the mass and take to meditating upon the true nature of National Socialist society, might even form the nucleus of future opposition to the regime. Hence the emphasis upon endless collective activity and goose-stepping columns of green, black, and brown. Hence too the prominence of "march" in Nazi diction.

No mystery surrounds the militarization of life and language by the Nazis. It stemmed from their belligerent view of the world. But it was more than just a symptom of their diseased outlook; it was also part of the preparation for Hitler's wars of conquest. Before they could marshal the nation's resources for a second great trial of arms with the decadent democracies, the Nazis had to mobilize the populace mentally for the conflict. Indoctrination, drilling, and militant language, they expected, not only would make war second nature for Germans but would instill in them the "blind obedience" to absolute authority that the Party demanded. Blind obedience, of course, entailed the renunciation of intelligence. The "soldierly personality" extolled by the Nazis was necessarily an unthinking one.

Manichaeanism in the Language of Nazi Propaganda

Whether Nazi or Communist, totalitarian propaganda unvaryingly divides the world into two antagonistic camps. On one side stands the proletariat, the exploited nations, or the Aryan race. This group embodies the good, the true, and the beautiful. Confronting it from the other camp, and embodying precisely opposite qualities, is the bourgeoisie, the imperialist powers, or the counterrace (*Gegenrasse*)

of Jews, blacks, and Frenchmen. Each camp upholds a single set of values—communism, capitalism, racial supremacy—which it seeks to impose upon the other. Between these two implacable enemies and their rival worldviews lies a void; no community of genuinely neutral opinion, no "third force," no third, fourth, and fifth sets of alternative values can be wedged between them. All is unqualifiedly white or black, light or dark, positive or negative, true or false, good or evil. In the final analysis, everyone in every society, regardless of his subjective opinions, is objectively for one side or the other and against its adversary; everyone is either a proletarian or a bourgeois, an Aryan or a Jew. The whole of reality, in fact, splits abruptly along this line of ideological or racial demarcation, so that besides proletarian and bourgeois classes there exist proletarian and bourgeois forms of democracy, or besides Aryan and "counter-" races there exist an Aryan science and a "Liberal-Jewish" science, and so on.

But, of course, real life is vastly more complicated than this. For instance, although Man in the abstract may possess all the traits attributed to him by the ideologue or the propagandist, human beings of flesh, blood, and bone seldom conform to any stereotypes of ideology or propaganda. In the world of space and time, though not in the mythical world of totalitarian propaganda, one finds among them gradations of good and evil as well as large patches of neutral ground. Manifold groups and persons representing an immense variety of viewpoints—some opposed, some overlapping, some wholly unconnected to one another—ply their particular ideas and interests. Far from being two-dimensional, then, reality has many sides and edges.

Totalitarian politicians may recognize this fact of multiformity, but for political and psychological reasons they will nevertheless continue to ignore the complexity of life and human nature. In one of *Mein Kampf*'s more illuminating passages, Hitler explained why this is so. The "true" leader of a nation, he wrote, will know how to focus his people's attention "on a single enemy" so as to mobilize them more readily for political action:

> It is part of the genius of a great leader to make adversaries of different fields appear as always belonging to one category only, because to weak and unstable characters the knowledge that there are various enemies will lead only too easily to incipient doubts as to their own cause.
>
> As soon as the wavering masses find themselves confronting too many enemies, objectivity at once steps in, and the question is raised whether actually all the others are wrong and their own nation or their own movement alone is right.[62]

These doubts, Hitler continued, will create paralysis. A necessary preventive measure, therefore, is to treat "essentially different internal enemies"—presumably the principle would apply to external ones as well—as though they were a single opponent. "This strengthens the belief in one's own cause and increases one's bitterness against the attacker."[63]

To diminish doubt, to reduce choices to two, to make one enemy out of many, the Nazis created a bipolar language. Their rhetoric mingles positive and negative superlatives, and their vocabulary in general mirrors the Party's Manichaean point of view. They also used what Orwell called "blanket terms," terms which, as does the *crimethink* of Newspeak, compress into a few syllables an abundance of "alien" attitudes, philosophies, and conceptions of government. By representing these subversive views collectively in one or a handful of terms, Nazi propaganda wiped out the distinctions among them and made them appear as one. The intention, of course, was to protect Germans from the dangers of intricate thinking about life and politics.

Consider the term *das System*. Initially in Nazi parlance it meant the Weimar Republic. But in the course of the *Kampfzeit* the Nazis inflated the term until it took in not just the Weimar regime but practically everything—parliamentarism, liberalism, internationalism, "Marxism"—that the Nazis abhorred. In tones of contempt and loathing the Party persistently attacked the "November System," and by "System" it seemed to signify everything that nazism was not. In the Nazi view a "system" connoted something static, not dynamic like the Movement; something rational, not irrational like the most fanatically loyal members of the Movement; a product of intelligence and logic, not of the fervor and faith that catalyzed the Party. The System was a political order, based on bourgeois values, which mechanically balanced and adjusted a diversity of competing material interests—to which artificial arrangement the Party opposed a naturally functioning "folkish organism" whose members were bound together by race and a common destiny. Suggesting without making explicit all of these antitheses, *das System* furnished a potent propaganda symbol for a blanket indictment of individualist and democratic values.[64]

Several years after the Party seized power and shattered "the System," Franz Six, an SS officer and author of a treatise on propaganda, discussed the purpose and effectiveness of the phrase in words that prove he had read his Hitler:

> If too many opponents are shown to one's own members, then the danger is that the inner solidarity and unity is corrupted by

> the feeling of inferiority which arises. Therefore, it is the task of a logically conducted propaganda to unite the opponents—even if they possess different characteristics and strive towards different goals—under one concept and to direct the strength of the attack to them as a whole. . . . "Das System" became the great point of attack, the object against which National Socialist agitation could drive the masses through the simplest and most easily understood formulas. It did not matter if this concept of "das System" meant the Republic, the Marxist, or the Liberal government. In any case, it had become necessary to create a popular slogan in the battle against present conditions which could incite and reach, through its brutality, the hate of the unemployed worker as well as the farmer aching under taxation. [The term *das System*] should unveil a spiritual emptiness of a state which had become, in its outer form as well as in its inner constitution, similar to the mechanism of a machine.[65]

The collapse of the Weimar regime temporarily deprived the Party of a valuable catchall expression, but there were others to draw upon. To discredit an idea or an adversary, for instance, Nazi propagandists often prefaced its name with "Jewish," a practice which greatly expanded the meaning of the adjective. "The Jew" was put to much the same use. Free government, free press, free trade unions, capitalism, communism, pacifism, the Second World War—all were part of a superconspiracy hatched by "the international world Jew."[66] The phrase meant everything and nothing. "Reaction," "Bolshevism," "Marxism," and "plutocracy" had similar catchall qualities. The last was a label which wartime propaganda often gummed on the leadership of all loyal British and American political parties. The phrase "Anglo-American plutocracy" comprehended Tories, Labourites, Liberals, Democrats, and Republicans alike, demolishing all too easily the differences between a Churchill and a Cripps or a Roosevelt and a Taft; all were "plutocrats." Frequently Goebbels combined "plutocracy" with other terms to coin even broader umbrella expressions. "Plutodemocracy," for instance, applied to Britain and America together, while "plutobolshevism" described all the Allies.[67]

Synthetic expressions like these (Lewis Carroll would have called them portmanteau words) point toward another peculiarity of Nazi Manichaean language: clusters of blanket terms. One such cluster was "Jewish Finance Bolshevism," which summed up in three flexibly defined words the whole opposition to Hitler. Apparently this phrase lacked elasticity enough to suit Dr. Goebbels, for on at least two occasions he pieced together an even more breathtaking cluster. During the battle of Stalingrad he coined the expression "Jewish

bolsho-pluto-democratic International," and a year earlier, in brief remarks delivered at the Berlin Sports Palace on 30 January 1942, he denounced the "plutocratic-Jewish-Masonic-Marxist-Communist-System."[68]

By coining a blanket terminology, Nazi propagandists were seeking to cover a multitude of sins against the regime. Heretical views needed no further elaboration; it was enough to give them a common name and damn them in a slogan. It was as if the Nazis had minted a dozen or so separate blanket words that were now—to judge from Goebbels's hyphenated monster term—merging into one plump compound. Yet in a thousand-year Reich, Goebbels's grotesque term would probably have given place to a more compacted expression; such, at least, would have been the logical (and the Orwellian) development. The best guess, given certain tendencies in German propaganda, is that the final blanket phrase, the one that said everything a German would ever need to know about his enemies, would have been simply "the Jew."

The Rhetoric of Name-Calling

Because in a totalitarian view of the world the enemy personifies evil, no terms of abuse (*Schimpfworte*) are too harsh to heap upon him. Certainly this was true of National Socialist practice. Over the years the Nazis evolved a large and venomous vocabulary for blackening the name and character of their opponents. Experts in the art of political vituperation, they turned it to their advantage in the war of words with adversaries of the Party and the Reich. As always, it was Hitler who set the tone; *Mein Kampf* shines with such pearls of rhetorical politeness as "red hyenas" and "tearful pacifist professional female mourners."[69] These were among the book's milder epithets.

In the 1920s and early 1930s much of the Nazis' rancorous rhetoric focused on the Weimar Republic and its founders. The German revolutionaries and republicans of 1918—the Nazis, typically, made no clear distinction between the two groups—were accused of having fathered a "deserters' revolt" in order to institute a fraudulent democracy (*Schwindeldemokratie*). This treason to the old Reich made them in Nazi eyes "November criminals" and "knapsack Sparticists."[70] As for the centerpiece of the Weimar "System," the democratic Parliament with its interminable debates and bargaining, the Nazis nicknamed it a *Quasselbude* or chatterbox. Within its chambers gathered partisan groups of what Hitler called "stupid good-for-nothings and

babblers." Hitler, indeed, as the following incomplete catalogue suggests, targeted some of his most malicious language at representative government and its patrons: "parliamentary dummies or incompetents," "putrid *bourgeois* party hacks," "guilt-conscious small rascals," "political nitwits." All of this democratic villainy, incompetence, and imbecility Hitler summed up in the phrase "republican mud of corruption."[71]

But the anti-Weimar barbs, bitter as they may have been, were not the sharpest in the rhetoric of name-calling. The nastiest epithets, as one might expect, were reserved for Jews. Julius Streicher's pornographic newspaper, *Der Stürmer*, is generally judged the most vitriolic of Nazi anti-Semitic publications. But some passages of *Mein Kampf* should rate a close second. Hitler spared his chosen enemy almost no printable insult: "eternal blood-sucker," "bow-legged, disgusting Jewish bastards," "evil enemy of humanity," "maggot in a rotting corpse." From time to time the *Völkischer Beobachter* published some noteworthy anti-Semitic libels of its own, denouncing at every opportunity the "Communist Jew-boys [*Judenbursche*]" and the "wretched lies of Jewish criminals."[72] Such characterizations matched the fury if not the originality of Hitler's slurs.

Two techniques for tarnishing the image of an adversary were so popular with the Nazis that they merit mention here. The first, possibly borrowed from Communist polemics, was to belittle a person or thing through the use of ironic quotation marks or, as a substitute for them in speeches, a sarcastic inflection of the voice. Thus the Nazis considered Einstein a "'research scientist'" and Heine a "'German' poet"; Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt were "'statesmen,'" and Weimar chancellor Wilhelm von Cuno, according to Hitler, was an "'eminent' 'national' 'statesman.'"[73] The other technique of detraction, much resorted to in *Mein Kampf*, was to disparage something by inserting the adjective "so-called" (*sogenannt*) in front of its name: "so-called reason," "so-called liberal press," "so-called Western Democracy." Often "so-called" and ironic quotation marks were mixed together to exact the last ounce of ridicule: "so-called 'legality,'" "so-called 'freedom,'" "so-called 'elected representatives.'"[74] Unable to make reasoned arguments against legality, freedom, and representative government, the Nazis tried to discredit them through grammatical and rhetorical trickery.

Intemperate and juvenile as all this invective may seem, it undoubtedly paid political dividends to the Nazis. It helped them stir up hatreds and hostile instincts they could direct at the enemy of the

hour. This hatemongering had at least four advantages. First, it stung, rankled, and perhaps demoralized many of the Party's opponents. Second, it permitted the populace, and members of the Movement in particular, to project their aggressiveness and guilt onto a public scapegoat, be it the larger-than-life Jew or the pigmy democrat. For example, much of the language leveled by German propaganda at the Allies in World War II—libels such as "bloodthirsty foe," "war criminals," and "slave dealers"[75]—seems little more than a half-conscious transferring of Nazi traits to Nazi enemies. Third, hatemongering created a helpful diversion, turning the gaze of the public away from Party leaders, with their numerous iniquities and shortcomings, and focusing it upon the eternal "other," the enemy who bore the blame for all the miseries of mankind.[76] Lastly, since a mind intoxicated with hatred is a mind incapable of rational thought, controlled hatemongering furthered the regime's objective of raising up a nation of blindly obedient fanatics.

But name-calling had its drawbacks. In the spring of 1942 Dr. Goebbels, complaining of the currency among Germans of "extremely coarse language," launched a campaign to promote "greater politeness in public life."[77] The irony should be obvious. For years the propaganda minister had publicly spat his venom upon political enemies. For many Germans he must have exemplified a rude tongue, and as a matter of record he was proud of his self-styled "lexicon of abuse."[78] As far as courtesy was concerned, he had set the worst of examples, although among Party members he was not by any means without rivals in rudeness. How then could Goebbels or any other Nazi have reasonably expected the public to speak and act with more dignity than its leadership? "Like father, like son," the saying goes, and like leader, like citizen.

Verbal Camouflage

In spite of its open attachment to violence and war, the Nazi party on occasion found it expedient to profess a love of peace and devotion to reason and goodwill among men. At such times its rhetoric grew strangely temperate in tone if not in content. Before 1933, for example, and especially after the Munich uprising ten years earlier, the failure of which forced Hitler to change his tactics and assume the persona of *Adolphe Légalité*, Nazi speakers often played down the Party's intention of dismantling the Weimar constitution and exterminating the Movement's enemies. From 1933 onward they sought to soft-pedal the processes of rearmament and imperial expansion in

order to becalm and befool a worried world. In all of this deception they resorted to olive-branch language that cleverly camouflaged the intentions and activities of the *Führer*.

These periods of comparative moderation in rhetoric certainly were not consistent with the general Nazi outlook, which remained throughout uncompromisingly bellicose. Nor were they consistent with Party practice, which at all times was directed at undermining the peace and breaking faith with politicians and nations. But Nazi leaders could justify them to the membership as necessary tactical interludes along the path to power and world domination. After all, it cost relatively little to tether one's tongue for awhile, and considerable benefits might accrue from carefully crafting one's words in order to flatter the hopes and to assuage the fears of more honorable and pacific persons.

Take the case of German rearmament, for instance. Hitler for obvious reasons could not in the middle 1930s say to Britain and France: "For the time being Germany is militarily impotent. But I am rearming it upon a massive scale. When I am done, I intend to conquer all of Europe and, if it strikes my fancy, the whole world." It was more prudent to proceed with rearmament while talking the language of the League of Nations, but without in any way shelving his objections to the Treaty of Versailles and the Locarno pact. This approach permitted Hitler to exploit the desire for peace and the capacity for self-delusion so prevalent among democratic multitudes. Thus, when he professed in his foreign policy addresses to believe in "peace," "justice," "equality of rights" (*Gleichberechtigung*), and an international "community of mutual understanding and confidence"—solemn Wilsonian ideals, all of them—many intelligent people in the democracies took him at his word.[79] They wanted to believe the best because they could not face the worst. What Hitler meant and what he allowed the West to think he meant were, of course, two contrary things. Not until the spring of 1939 did French and British opinion fully waken to the peril, and by then it was too late. Hitler's *Einschläferungpolitik*, the policy of lulling the democracies to sleep with reassuring rhetoric and empty gestures, had bought him the time he needed.

Euphemism and Nazi Injustice

For all their frankly ferocious forms of expression, circumstances beyond their power to control sometimes led the Nazis to sugarcoat their language. Much as they might boast of their "brutal candor," they often preferred to conceal unpleasant or unfavorable facts in a

thicket of understatement and topsy-turvy terms. Unlike camouflage expressions, however, which had the tactical and practical purpose of duping the Party's enemies, euphemisms—words and phrases designed to make a bad thing sound good—were less a sign of cleverness than a symptom of weakness in the Nazi regime. And they were intended as much to mislead the friends as the enemies of national socialism.

In a sense the entire Nazi language, with its counterfeit religious fervor and its pretentious twaddle about blood and soil, was an extended euphemism which turned reality inside out, covering the lust for power with the verbal garb of "legality," "folk," and "freedom."[80] But beyond this general euphemistic quality, there was a need for specific euphemisms tailored to specific situations. By far the greater number of Nazi euphemisms seem to have originated in the 1930s, when the cruelties of the concentration camps and the increasing corruption and criminality of the regime obliged its defenders to cultivate a glib tongue, and still later, when repeated reverses in the Second World War had Party spokesmen scrambling to describe the disasters in words that minimized the damage done and prevented public morale from completely disintegrating.

The need for euphemisms, then, arose chiefly from two distinct sources. The first of these sources was the continuing brutality and tyranny of the Hitler government. Apparently the Party believed that consistently brutal candor about its injustices might arouse public wrath. Why else would Nazi officialdom portray the demolition of a large Protestant church building, a focal point of passive opposition to government policies, as "urban renewal"?[81] Why else would it refer to money withheld from workers' paychecks, allegedly to assist the poor and the unemployed, as "voluntary" contributions?[82] Why else would it characterize pogroms and officially fomented mob assaults on Jewish homes, shops, and synagogues as "spontaneous" actions?[83] Why else would it name two of its main organs of censorship the Chamber of Culture and the Office for Cultivation of Literature?

Many were the euphemisms that masked the deeds of the Gestapo and the SS. Never in National Socialist discourse did the Gestapo arrest a person arbitrarily. Instead, it took him into "protective custody" (*Schutzhaft*).[84] Never did it rob him of his valuables: it "secured" (*sichergestellt*) his property.[85] Never did it torture him to make him confess: he merely underwent "intensive interrogation."[86] Enemies of the state were not murdered: they were "taken care of," "eliminated" (*ausgemerzt*), "liquidated," subjected to "very severe punishment."[87] The inmates of concentration camps did not perform

slave labor: they engaged in "productive work." Nor did the guards at these camps use prisoners for target practice: the latter were *auf der Flucht erschossen*—"shot while trying to escape."[88]

About the death camps, where "biologically inferior" peoples were murdered by the hundreds of thousands, there hung, so to speak, a haze of euphemistic terms that dimmed the light of reality. Signs at the entrances to Auschwitz and Dachau proclaimed that *Arbeit macht frei*—"Work makes you free." Buildings and other landmarks around the campsites were given such cheerful names as "the Blithe Flea" and "the Happy Nightingale"; the square in front of the gas chamber at Maidanek was christened "the Rose Garden." The shower rooms where Jews were gassed were known as "Baths and Inhalation Institutes." Of prisoners who succumbed in the camps the guards often remarked in black mirth that they had gone to rest "in Abraham's bosom" or had been "rushed through the chimney" (*durch den Schornstein gejagt*)—that is, cremated.[89]

Admittedly, most of these prison and death-camp expressions were not intended for public circulation. The SS functionaries used them as prison slang or as part of a bureaucratic code language, sometimes spoken and sometimes written into official records and dispatches. This police jargon included many euphemisms for murder. Thus the SS did not exterminate the Polish educated class: it undertook in Poland an "extraordinary pacification action" (*Außerordentliche Befriedungsaktion*).[90] Jews and other persecuted groups were not rounded up in large numbers and shipped to extermination camps: they were "evacuated." A Jew was never shot or gassed to death: he was "led to the final solution [*Endlösung*]" or given "special treatment" (*Sonderbehandlung*).[91] (See appendix C.)

The Second World War created a need for fresh euphemisms to veil German aggression. The invasion of Poland, for instance, was a "police action."[92] Works of art plundered by the SS in conquered countries and crated back to the Fatherland were "relocated" or "exported."[93]

In later phases of the conflict, when Hitler's supposedly invincible armies began losing battles, Nazi propagandists and publicists for the armed services searched for innocuous-sounding synonyms and circumlocutions for "defeat" and "retreat." Here was the second major source of Nazi euphemisms. The German flight from Moscow in the winter of 1941–42, for example, was explained in *Wehrmacht* communiqués as a series of "improvements of the front line." The retreat from El Alamein was described as a successful "disengagement."[94] After the battle of Stalingrad, as German armies fell back along the

Russian front, the narrators of German newsreels announced their withdrawal "according to plan," while the *Völkischer Beobachter* assured its readers on the home front: "We are momentarily experiencing in the East a heavy military burden."[95]

Defeat after defeat was transmuted into a "setback," a "shortening" of the front, a "systematic evacuation without enemy pressure." Enemy forces did not score breakthroughs or overrun Reich territory—not in the Nazi language, anyway; rather, they "managed deep inroads" or "insignificant penetrations" that, however, were quickly "parried" or "localized" by German arms. After the Red Army reached the Dnieper River in the fall of 1943, German propaganda grew more candid, yet the press still understated the desperate military predicament by calling it a "crisis" or an "extremely critical situation."[96]

Far from proving the strength and cunning of the regime, many of these Nazi euphemisms suggest certain of its weaknesses and failures, if not its outright impotence. For example, in spite of the Party's best exertions, it failed to explode popular religious prejudices: the mass of Germans remained rooted in Judeo-Christian morality and might have bristled at a full and frank disclosure of what went on in the death camps or in the cells of Gestapo stations; hence the need to hang a verbal mask upon murder and inhumanity. Hitler had bragged about his war machine, only to see it fall to pieces: this too created a need for oblique language, and apologists for the regime could but gloss over the calamity with words that fooled few people for any length of time. To put it another way, the Nazis could not altogether control reality and physical facts; and when these were extremely unfavorable or embarrassing, the only thing left to do was to obscure them for as long as possible with linguistic smokescreens.

At some distant date, perhaps, if Hitler had won the war, if he had trampled all of his foes domestic and foreign underfoot, and if he had been able to erect a permanent world empire governed by the Party's perverse values, the regime would have dropped all the rhetorical affectation. For it would then have mastered reality. In that case, what further need of euphemisms for defeat and murder? Minus restraints upon the regime from within and without, from influential pastors at home and unbeaten enemy armies abroad, Party rhetoric could become more and more openly boastful and brutal, less and less inhibited by the need to beguile the masses with bathos. It could reflect perfectly the Party's cult of power and sadism. "We store up our hate," Hitler remarked to a gathering of Party intimates in 1934, "and think of the day on which we shall cast off the mask, and stand

revealed as those we are and eternally shall remain."[97] But in the meantime Nazi language had reached only a rough midpoint in its evolution, balanced precariously between pseudoreligious tumidity and euphemistic tendencies at one end and undisguised brutality at the other.

But let no one discount entirely the utility of euphemism. Amid the misfortunes of 1943–45 it seems to have prolonged the illusions of at least a few credulous supporters of the regime.[98] Prisoners in the death camps were doubtless deceived at first by some of the agreeable-sounding names of places. On members of the SS death squads, moreover, euphemistic language may have acted as a sort of drug, like the alcohol and tobacco dispensed so freely among workers at the death camps. Who can say? Phrases like "the Rose Garden" and "Abraham's bosom" may well have had a tranquilizing effect on the killers at Dachau and elsewhere. "I need men who will not stop to think if they're ordered to knock someone down!" Hitler exclaimed.[99] But apparently even SS thugs could feel flickers of conscience at the wrong moment. A goodly supply of cigarettes, whiskey, and euphemisms must have made their job a bit more easy.

CHAPTER FOUR

"SYNCHRONIZING" THE DICTIONARY

"People who can define are masters."[1] Many years before Stokely Carmichael, the radical black activist, formulated this important axiom of power politics, the National Socialist German Workers party implicitly recognized it and applied it in practice. Inasmuch as most people most of the time think in words, to control the content or meanings of words is to some extent to control what goes on inside someone's head. In redefining terms to suit its own purposes, therefore, the Nazi party was engaging in thought control. By analogy, it was also treating words as it treated people. Just as some Germans needed reconditioning from recalcitrant creatures into unflagging agents of the *Führer*'s will, so it was that certain German words needed a kind of reconditioning; that is, they had to undergo changes in meaning, that they might better express and convey to the populace the *Führer*'s pleasure. And just as those persons not amenable to reconditioning might be

jailed or "liquidated," so it was that those words whose meanings could not conveniently be changed, those with undesirable and uncontrollable connotations, had themselves to undergo a sort of liquidation: they were purged from publications and banned from Party pronouncements. These linguistic practices—semanticide and logocide, the wrongful redefining and the killing of words—are the subject of this chapter.

The Politics of Semanticide

Under the Nazis semanticide—the willful perversion of a word's meaning—involved redefining terms to make them express only the Party's point of view about the things and concepts they were supposed to symbolize. Terms could be redefined either informally or formally. They were informally redefined when Party spokesmen used them in new ways. They were formally redefined when encyclopedias and dictionaries were rewritten to reflect the changed meanings. A striking illustration of formal semanticide is *Meyers Lexikon*, for many years a standard German reference work. Seven editions of this encyclopedia appeared before 1933. An eighth was issued (1936–42) in the Third Reich. Reviewers in the muzzled press praised it for having dispensed with "objectivity" and undertaken a "revolutionary revision" of earlier editions, thereby bringing German lexicography "into harmony with the needs of today's life"—that is, into harmony with the Party's picture of reality.[2]

Among the many words whose meanings the Nazis altered, a fair number were lifted straight out of the liberal, humanist, and left-wing socialist vocabularies. The Party took these terms and turned their senses inside out. For example, in the liberal tradition, at least from about 1800 to the present, political democracy has denoted (to use Lincoln's classic phrase) government of, by, and for the people. Most liberals would agree that in such a system of government free and frequent elections, majority rule, the right to form opposition parties, and at least a few other legal and constitutional limits upon the exercise of power must figure prominently. But in *Mein Kampf* Hitler coined the phrase *germanische Demokratie* (Germanic democracy), which, he told the reader, means "choice of the leader, but absolute authority of the latter." In such a state, Hitler observed, "there will be no voting by a majority on single questions, but only the decision of the individual"—that is, the leader—"who backs it with his life and all he has."[3] Democracy now signified a Caesarist dictatorship

fortified by modern technology and science and a secret police force. After Hitler inaugurated the totalitarian Third Reich, his press secretary, Dr. Otto Dietrich, could therefore announce to the nation with complete aplomb and no evident sense of irony: "Democracy has appeared for the first time in history in the person of Adolf Hitler."[4]

Freiheit (freedom or liberty) was another victim of semanticide. Liberalism from Thomas Hobbes onward has tended to define freedom as the absence of restraints upon the individual. Nazism defined it as the absence of restraints upon the state. "There is no freedom of the individual," Dietrich declared. "There is only freedom of peoples, nations or races."[5] "The choice of our duties, that is our freedom," Alfred Rosenberg argued, adding that "freedom means to be bound by the ties of race . . . and this demands *protection* of the race"—protection through the Nuremberg Laws and other measures for total control over the citizenry, to be sure.[6] So that in essence freedom is slavery: submergence of self in the *Volksgemeinschaft*; submission to rule by the bludgeon and the arbitrary edict. What else can Hitler have had in mind when in 1930 he looked forward to the day he could "liberate [*befreien*] the German *Volk*"?[7] Or Robert Ley, head of DAF, when assuring German workers on the morrow of the Party's suppression of free trade unions: "Adolf Hitler is your friend! Adolf Hitler is fighting for your freedom!"[8] For that matter, what else can the Brownshirts of the SA have had in mind when chanting this line from their battle song (*Kampflied*):

> *Erst wenn die Juden bluten, erst dann sind wir befreit!*
> *[Only when the Jews bleed, not till then shall we be freed!]*[9]

Closely related to freedom in Western thought are the concepts of law, justice, and right. The German language blends these concepts into the single word *Recht*. This too underwent strange transformations as it rolled off Nazi tongues. When Hitler, for instance, asserted that *Menschenrecht bricht Staatsrecht*—human rights break state rights—he meant something vastly different from what such a sentence, wrenched from its context in *Mein Kampf*, would seem to a democratic mentality to mean. He was not saying that the rights of individuals, of any and all men and women, of Elsa, Frieda, Hans, and Gunther, are prior in importance to the powers of government. Rather, he was saying that the right of the racially strong to rule must take precedence over a political system, such as the Weimar Republic, that fails to preserve the superior race undefiled by alien blood. When Hitler pleaded for the "rights" of "personality," furthermore,

he was not espousing the God-given freedom of individuals to develop their character and talents in their own way, unhindered by government, but the right of the dictator to rule unhindered by his people.[10] In this view, right in effect means might, which is doubtless what Hans Frank, the future governor general of Nazi-occupied Poland, intended to suggest in 1935 when he called the *Führer* "a champion, sent by God, for German right in the world."[11]

As socialists of a sort, the Nazis naturally drew upon the vocabulary of the international socialist movement. But they reinterpreted and sometimes entirely corrupted the original sense of each borrowed symbol. For instance, in advocating a "national solidarity of creative labor" which joined together all "workers of the head [*Stirn*] and the hand [*Faust*]," the Nazis were giving new import to a couple of old socialist catchwords. *Arbeiter* (worker) was no longer a name for the proletarian—only an "honorary title for all creative *Volksgenossen*," as *Meyers Lexikon* explained. Thus management and labor alike were lumped together under the label of worker, presumably in order to obscure the differences between social classes and to strengthen the illusion of a harmonious *Volksgemeinschaft*. *Solidarität* had once meant international unity of the workers or manual laborers with the aim of ending capitalist rule and creating a classless society, but under the Nazis, who in power actually deprived German workers of their rights, including the right to strike and the right to form free trade unions, the word denoted a national unity of all classes of the same blood in a *Führerstaat*.[12] In the *Volksgemeinschaft* the proletariat would know its proper place, hierarchy and privilege would be preserved and cherished, and class antagonisms would cool down and disappear. For why should like-blooded citizens expend their energies in class struggle instead of the infinitely nobler struggle for *Lebensraum*? Race consciousness ought to supersede class consciousness; blood is thicker than class.

Many another term dear to socialists or humanists had its meaning twisted or narrowed by the Nazis. *Menschentum* and *Menschlichkeit*, humanity and humanness, had once embraced the whole of mankind. The Nazis, however, stripped them of their universality and applied them to particular racial types. Party literature distinguished, for example, between an "Aryan humanity" and a "Jewish subhumanity," between a "Germanic humanity" and a "Bolshevik subhumanity"; in no wise could there exist a global humanity, a multiracial family of equals under one divine Parent.[13] Similarly, *Gemeinschaft* (community or association) and *Volk* (nation or people) became almost synonymous with race. Moreover, as was noted in a government

directive of August 1936 which banned from the press such phrases as "Catholic *Volk*," "church *Volk*," and "Evangelical *Volk*": "There is only a German *Volk*."[14] By government decree, too, *Partei* (party) was restricted in its application to the one true Party, the Nazis, and *Parteigenosse* (party comrade) could refer solely to members of that party, not to Soviet Communists or English Labourites.[15] Furthermore, there could be but one *Führer*, one *Kanzler* or chancellor, and one form of *Schulung* or training, namely, the doctrinal training of Nazi party members. From all other meanings and uses these words were officially fenced in.[16]

Through semanticide national socialism even modified the meaning of virtue. For instance, the eighth edition of *Meyers Lexikon* added a new meaning to the old one of *Ehre* (honor): "continuance and preservation of one's own kind [*Art*]; defense of, and if necessary self-sacrifice for, one's own kind and its highest values."[17] On *Heldentum* (heroism), *Meyers* expounded: "Heroism is rooted in inspiration [*Begeisterung*] and instinct, not in reflection and calculation." "Heroism [*Heldenhaftigkeit*]," Rosenberg observed in *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*, "is the basic trait of all Nordic peoples."[18] Poles and Russians, therefore, as comparatively pluckless races, were incapable of displaying consciously heroic qualities on the field of battle; animal ferocity was the most they could muster. In wartime, accordingly, the German press was prohibited from using "heroic" or "brave" to describe the actions of any soldiers except German ones. A government directive of October 1941, furthermore, required that journalists refer to Soviet troops not as soldiers but as "just plain Bolsheviks, beasts and animals."[19] As with honor and heroism, so with courage, constancy, pride, duty, sacrifice, loyalty, leadership, and comradeship: all these excellences, in their most ample measure at any rate, belonged exclusively to Aryan humanity.

Most of the terms cited so far had a positive valuation before the Party appropriated them, and although the Nazis changed the content, they retained and tried to take advantage of the positive connotation of each. Sometimes, however, they turned negative words into positive ones. We have seen how this occurred with terms like "hard" and "brutal." "Barbaric," "blind," and "headstrong" (*unbändig*) were also reassessed and assimilated into the vocabularies of brutality and militarization. Another negative-into-positive term was *Arbeitsdienst* (labor service). The entry for this word in the seventh edition of *Meyers* (1924–30) stated simply: "See compulsory labor." The eighth or Nazi edition, on the other hand, defined *Arbeitsdienst* as "the great school of education for the National Socialist *Volksgemeinschaft*."

(The Reich Labor Service Act of 26 July 1935 had introduced compulsory labor service for German males of nineteen; compulsory service for females followed in July 1939.) The earlier *Meyers* defined concentration camps as "camps established by England during the Boer War . . . for the Boer civilian population, in which women and children died in masses"—an accurate definition for its day. The later *Meyers* altered the definition thus: "Better [term to use is] detention-and-education camps. They have had since 1933 the object of a) taking in . . . habitual criminals, b) rendering Communists and other enemies of the National Socialist state . . . temporarily [*sic*] innocuous and educating them into useful *Volksgenossen*."[20] For the Nazis "propaganda," too, lost something of the unsavoriness connected with it in the public mind ever since the Allied "Halt the Hun!" campaigns of the First World War. Secret government directives of July 1937 and May 1942 declared it a "legally protected term" which "must not be applied to objectionable things." For such phrases as "atrocity propaganda" and "Bolshevist propaganda," therefore, the press must substitute "atrocity agitation," "atrocity campaign," or comparable expressions. "In short—propaganda only if for us, agitation [*Hetze*] if against us."[21]

Most remarkable of all the positively revaluated words was *fanatisch*. Few people before the Nazis—the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin is an important exception—would have used it in any but a negative sense. The seventh edition of *Meyers*, for instance, defined fanatical as "hotheaded [*hitzig*], full of zeal."[22] But then Hitler used the word positively in *Mein Kampf*, and, like hotheadedness and zealotry, it grew suddenly fashionable. To obey blindly, to be unbending in one's devotion to *Volk* and *Führer*, to be filled with undeflectable faith in the truth of national socialism, to be willing at all costs to struggle for the triumph of that truth over its enemies—such were the marks of a Nazi fanatic. "Fanatical vow," "fanatical will," "fanatical belief in final victory"—not many Nazis could mount a public platform without spicing their speech with expressions like these. For them "fanatical" became the superlative of superlatives. The new sense of the word found its way into the eighth *Meyers*: "impregnated by an idea, inspired."[23] True, Party propaganda reverted occasionally to the negative sense. Early editions of *Mein Kampf*, for example, censured the "truly fanatical fury" of Soviet Jewry. But by the middle of World War II, as doom drew near for the Nazis and "fanatical belief in final victory" seemed necessary to the Party's if not the nation's survival, the Reich extended its protection to the term. Accordingly, in the 820th (*sic*) edition of *Mein Kampf* (1943), "truly fanatical fury"

was changed to "truly satanic fury."[24] And when Goebbels applauded as "fanatical National Socialists" the Berlin Guardsmen who thwarted the takeover attempt of July 1944, no one could doubt he meant to pay them the highest of compliments.[25]

As a bipolar language Nazi German needed negative as well as positive terms, terms pertaining to anything "alien" or inconsistent with national socialism. Under any but a Nazi regime, *Blutvergiftung*, for example, would have meant literal blood poisoning or toxemia. For the Nazis it meant the deterioration of a race caused by its interbreeding with inferior peoples. In this sense Hitler employed the word in *Mein Kampf*: "All great cultures of the past perished only because the originally creative race died off through blood-poisoning."[26] Almost synonymous with *Blutvergiftung* was *Erbsünde*, which hitherto had stood for "original sin" in the Christian sense. *Blutschande* and *Blutsünde* once signified incest; beginning with *Mein Kampf* they signified sexual intercourse between persons of different races—an obvious effort to graft onto the notion of miscegenation the negative sentiments associated with incest.[27] *Mischehe*, or mixed marriage, originally referred to marriage between members of different religious denominations. We can trace the gradual perversion of this meaning in the *Duden* dictionary. The tenth (1929) edition of this authoritative German lexicon lists *Mischehe* without defining it. The eleventh (1934) edition, the first *Duden* published under the auspices of Nazi scholars, defines it as "marriage between persons of different [religious] confessions or of different races." The twelfth (1942) *Duden* has "marriage between members of different race [*sic*], earlier of different confessions." *Hirts deutsches Wörterbuch*, published in the same year, elaborates thus: "The parents belong to different races. The Rom.-Cath. Church misleadingly labels marriage between Protestants and Catholics as *M*[*ischehe*]."[28] "*Mischehe*," the Nazi *Meyers* reminded its readers, "is an offense to German blood."[29]

Words like *Mischehe* and *Erbsünde* had negative connotations even before the Nazis got to them. With words like *Intellekt*, *Intellektueller*, and *Intelligenz* it was otherwise: the Party had first to reverse their polarity from the positive. Intellect, the antithesis of instinct in the Nazi worldview, came to be regarded as "egalitarian," "barren," "destructive," even "diabolical." An intellectual was a person ruled by an arid rationality rather than by robust emotions and primitive (hence sound) impulses. The intelligentsia as a whole was "bourgeois," "objective," and "Jewish" (themselves negatively valuated adjectives).[30]

Odd as it may seem, some terms had both negative and positive senses. For example, there were both healthy and harmful forms

of *Haß* or hatred. Healthy hatred, in the words of *Meyers Lexikon*, was notable for its "inflexible but fair, straightforward and courageous hardness, dominated by will and insight," a kind of hatred which sprang "principally from consciousness of duty and responsibility for the protection of threatened values." This "heroic hatred" so characteristic of the Nordic peoples stood in glaring contrast to the "cowardly hatred" of the Jewish subhumanity.[31] Even "ruthless" and "brutal" had at times dual applications, so that Hitler could acclaim the brutality of Party members even while decrying the "brutal fist" and the "inner rapacious brutality" of Jewry.[32] The ambivalence of terms such as these probably had its origin in the contingent morality of the Nazis' Manichaean view of the world: an action or quality was laudable if "ours," damnable if the enemy's.

Positive words, negative words, ambivalent words, words with narrowed meanings: together with umbrella expressions and the many compounds created out of words like *Rasse*, *Blut*, and *Volk*, they comprised a *weltanschaulich* vocabulary which set forth in emotionally charged idiom the Nazi outlook on life. The Party quite consciously was fashioning an official language for the purpose of circumscribing thought and precluding civil disobedience. For if it could control the terms of public discourse, defining them in any way it wished, the Party could also control its subjects' thoughts—and hence their behavior—far more effectively than if it relied on coercion alone. That, at any rate, is what the ruling elite appears to have believed. Early in 1942 Goebbels jotted in his diary: "I have given instructions for our Ministry to prepare dictionaries for the occupied areas in which the German language is to be taught. They are, above all, to use a terminology that conforms to our modern conception of the state. Especially those expressions are to be translated that stem from our political dogmatism. That is an indirect form of propaganda from which I expect rather good results in the long run."[33] One can well imagine what sort of "good results" Goebbels contemplated. "The long run," of course, never arrived for the Nazis. But in the short run they at least began the process of politicizing the dictionary. Granted several more decades and a few more editions of *Duden* and *Meyers*, what marvels of semanticide and thought reform might they have accomplished?

Logocide and Language Regulations

By logocide I mean the murder of a word.[34] In the Third Reich this crime against humanity and culture could take either of two forms.

First, words were discreetly dropped from dictionaries. The word *Pressefreiheit* (freedom of the press), for instance, disappeared from the twelfth edition of *Duden* in 1942. And there is evidence that *Nation*, a term with too many ties to liberal and democratic philosophy, would have followed it within a few years.[35] But dictionaries could be only gradually *ausgerichtet*, and in the brief duration of Hitler's Reich relatively few words were killed off in this fashion. In the intervals between the various politicized editions of dictionaries, the Ministry of Propaganda relied largely upon a second expedient, that of *Sprachregelungen* or language regulations, to control thought through logocide. As a rule these secret directives, most often composed by Goebbels, were issued to German journalists during daily press conferences in Berlin and elsewhere. Among other things, they enjoined or forbade the use of particular terms in print. Although framed in the form of "requests" by Promi, any failure to comply with them carried severe penalties.[36]

The *Sprachregelungen* became an instrument of power diplomacy, aiding in the grand deceptions and the *Einschläferungpolitik* of the 1930s. Directives of 16 December 1933 and 20 October 1934, to take two examples, barred the press from employing expressions like "racial decline," "mixed race," and "negrification" (*Vernegerung*) in discussing or reporting on France. For fear of offending Arab countries, moreover, the Reich government distributed to representatives of the press corps this directive of 22 August 1935: "The Ministry of Propaganda requests that in [treatments of] the Jewish question the word 'anti-Semitic' or 'anti-Semitism' be avoided, because German policy is dead set merely against the Jews, not against the Semites. Instead of this the word 'anti-Jewish' must be used." From late 1933 the expressions *Gelbe Gefahr* (Yellow Peril) and *Drang nach dem Osten* (drive to the East) were kept out of articles on East Asia: the Nazis were courting Japan and wished to avoid affronting a possible friend. Another early directive banned the expression "German-Austrian Union [*Anschluß*]"; the Nazis, who as an opposition party had vowed they would someday make Austria part of a "Greater Germany," now needed to sooth the sensibilities of world opinion and play down their expansionist appetites.[37]

Some of the directives issued after the abandonment of *Einschläferungpolitik* suggest a more aggressive foreign policy. Thus a *Sprachregelung* of 13 December 1937 scrapped the word *Völkerbund* (League of Nations): "This term no longer exists. The term 'Geneva Entente' must take its place."[38] After the onset of war, however, language regulations again emphasized the camouflage or the

euphemistic function. On the first day of the Second World War came this directive: "In all news items, commentaries etc., the word 'war' must be avoided. Germany is repelling a Polish attack. That is the slogan."[39] When the Red Army checked the German offensive in Russia in the autumn of 1942, Goebbels warned newsmen not to use the word "defensive" in reporting on the *Wehrmacht*'s plight. The term, he pointed out, had a "defeatist ring," was "reminiscent of 1914," and called to mind "dangerous parallels" with the Great War. In its place he proposed euphemistic substitutes, such as "we are digesting the conquered territories."[40]

Clearly, certain words were deemed dangerous by Nazi thought-controllers. From those terms, Goebbels warned, "we should shrink as the devil does from Holy Water."[41] They created undesirable images in the public mind, and for that reason they had to be eliminated as far as possible. One of these words was "Stalingrad," which practically disappeared from German newspapers after Soviet forces encircled General Paulus's Sixth Army in November 1942.[42] Another was "peace," which Goebbels, trying to guard against public over-optimism about an early end to the war, decided to ban from the press in March 1940.[43] Still another term inexpedient to employ was "catastrophe," prohibited by a *Sprachregelung* of March 1944 from being used in reporting on the results of Allied bombing of German cities. In its stead writers were instructed to use the euphemistic *Großnotstand* (major emergency). Likewise the word *Katastropheneinsatz* (catastrophe relief) yielded to *Luftkriegseinsatz* (air war relief).[44] At one time or another during the war "Allies," "United Nations," "Yugoslavia," "Free French fighting forces," "partisans," "U-boat warfare," and "suicide squads" became unwords, as it were, and gave way by decree to more acceptable substitutes. "Allies" and "United Nations," for instance, were supplanted by the more controllable and mind-contracting phrases "our enemies" and "the enemy side," while "French Foreign Legion under British direction" took the place of "Free French fighting forces."[45]

Terms connected with communism also vanished from the German press. Especially repugnant to Nazi propagandists, and a noteworthy victim of logocide, was the word "red." The aversion of Goebbels and his colleagues to this term is apparent from numerous directives drawn up by the Propaganda Ministry during the Spanish Civil War and the world war that followed. An order to the press of 16 January 1937, for example, required the use of "Bolshevist ruling power" instead of "Red government in Valencia." In June 1941, furthermore, the press was reminded not to use "red" in writing about Soviet Rus-

sia.[46] Someone along the line of command must have slipped, for by October 1942 Goebbels was having to explain at one of his ministerial conferences the imprudence of reporting the names of the Stalingrad factories "Red October" and "Red Barricade": "These names might appeal to those communist-infested circles [in Germany] which still exist here and there."[47]

The real reason "red" was so vexing to Goebbels is not far to seek. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler had stressed the importance of red as a color in propaganda posters, armbands, emblems, and flags. The adoption of red by the Nazi party not only infuriated leftists, Hitler wrote, but also symbolized "the social idea of the movement."[48] But "the social idea" was lost in the purges of June 1934, if not earlier. In smashing the free trade unions, freezing workers' wages, restricting their freedom of movement, establishing conscript labor, and liquidating much of the Strasser wing of the Party, the Nazis betrayed the revolutionary ideals and promises that had quickened so many of the Movement's early adherents. Given this legacy of suppression, the word "red" could only revive memories and emotions that more cynical Nazis would as soon let sleep. With good cause, therefore, did Goebbels attempt to banish it from the printed page.

I have cited only a handful among hundreds of castaway words. All of the *Sprachregelungen*, like so much else in the National Socialist use of language, appear to have had as their ultimate object the reduction of consciousness. Interestingly, these attempts to fine-tune public opinion by impeding the flow of certain words produced disagreeable side effects. More than once Goebbels grumbled that German journalism was plagued with clichés and "boring, flat phrases."[49] Coming from the architect of language control, the hired word-killer who daily dictated to his team of straitjacketed journalists what to say and how to say it, these complaints were pointless. Nazi writing lacked pep and luster because, as the *Sprachregelungen* prove, the Party could not allow its writers what they most needed in order to write prose that crackled: freedom of thought and expression.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE NATURE OF NAZI LANGUAGE

Throughout these chapters on the language of Nazidom, I have been using the expression "National Socialist language" as though there was a form of speech and writing identifiably and distinctively Nazi. Yet some scholars have questioned whether in fact such a language ever existed. Wolfgang Sauer, for example, who inspected the speeches of thirty-five Nazi members of the Weimar Reichstag, has argued that these partisans employed the same vocabulary as their opponents. The parliamentary parties of the republican period drew from a common store of German and foreign words, and the Nazis, Sauer concluded, were no exception. Their language had nothing at all distinctive about it.[1]

To a point, Sauer is correct. The Nazis did not speak in strange tongues. But they did attach to many a common word or phrase their own peculiar meaning. Like their left-wing counterparts the Communists, they could at least lisp, as it were, the language of socialism

and liberal democracy, their lips giving shape to the slogans of freedom and justice even as the Party by its usage and its actions utterly corrupted the meaning of those terms. Thereby the Nazis were spreading semantic confusion and political cross talk on which they hoped to capitalize.[2] No mere mechanical content analysis can uncover that fact, any more than it can explain and quantify the curious kind of assertiveness and the impudent bullying tone that often characterized Nazi discourse and helped to distinguish it from rival varieties of political language.

There is, however, another and more formidable objection to the concept of a National Socialist language. To the unpracticed eye and ear the Nazis may seem to have used not one but several "languages." At times their rhetoric was a baffling blend of bureaucratese and street slang, brutality and sentimentality, religious pathos and Darwinian lingo. Nor was this always just a case of different writers adopting different styles. Frequently one and the same Nazi used several different modes of expression in a single speech, book, or article. Goebbels, for example, mingled sports metaphors and scientific and religious imagery with apparent abandon. Was this sheer stupidity, was it an utter indifference to form and substance, or did some deep design underlie all the seemingly chaotic and contradictory cant?

In some degree the chaos of its discourse reflected nazism's hatred of bourgeois order and system and its exaltation of the irrational. But arguably there were other and more practical reasons for using such rhetoric. First, the Nazis made some show of being a *Volkspartei*, a national political party which transcended class divisions and protected the aggregate interests of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Thus they needed to woo a diversity of groups, some of whom were traditional antagonists. Large landholders and peasants, conservatives and socialists, monarchists and republicans, Christians and militant atheists—all these segments of the populace had somehow to be cemented together into a great monolith, "a single concentrated opinion, a single concentrated will, one conviction and one resolution," as Hitler expressed it.[3] The Party would have to pull into its ranks a Gregor Strasser as well as a Julius Streicher, a Fritz Thyssen as well as a Joseph Goebbels. But how? One method, used with great effect after 1933, was terror: fear of the Gestapo inspired many a potential opponent to profess the Nazi faith humbly and hypocritically. A milder method was to appeal to each social and ideological group by talking its language, and never mind the mixed jargon and incongruities of style and imagery that resulted. Thus it was that the Nazis coined or popularized such discordant phrases as "national

socialism," "steely romanticism" (*stählerne Romantik*), and the half-archaic, half-modernist "sentinel [*Schildwächter*] of the new spirit."[4]

As might be expected, the second reason behind this *e pluribus unum* language of nazism was undoubtedly a desire to stifle or confuse the thought of those who read or heard it. Just as a skillful pitcher keeps his batter off balance by mixing pitches, dizzying him in order to strike him out, so it was with much of Nazi rhetoric, especially the spoken kind. It kept the reader or listener in a whirl, nonplussing him and playing havoc with his emotions. The Nazi message, such as it was, did not change; but the manner of speaking often did. "One must constantly be repeating the same thing in different forms," Goebbels wrote in his diary.[5] Under the Nazis this "polyform" approach to propaganda that was "monoform in will" produced what Victor Klemperer has called an "unscrupulous mixture of heterogeneous elements of style."[6]

Mein Kampf has much of the mixed-pitches style about it. Indeed, Hitler's magnum opus became for the Nazi movement the exalted and widely imitated model of National Socialist language.[7] Admittedly the book suffers from what sober critics might take to be fatal defects. For one thing, it overflows with the conceit and megalomania of its author. For another, its treatment of past and present events is muddled and dishonest. It repels with impenetrable prose anyone attempting to scrutinize it line by line and phrase by phrase. A rhetorical crazy quilt, it fuses biological terms, bureaucratese, pseudo-religious blather, bad grammar, and stupid bombast into an almost unreadable whole.[8] Only at rare intervals, such as in the passages on agitation and propaganda, did Hitler even begin to wax lucid. But to the quarter-literate German who read bits of the book or heard them quoted, and perhaps even to a certain species of alienated intellectual who imbibed the whole brew, *Mein Kampf* must have sounded impressive. Its very vagueness was an asset; its very irrationality imparted an appearance of mystical power to its pages. And undeniably the book gave utterance to the anger and enmity of a race recently vanquished in war and humiliated at the peace table. Hence we must not underrate its attraction for Germans or the potency of its language in stirring people to action without seriously stimulating them to think.

So there was method to the madness of Nazi discourse. There was also a great deal of emotion in it. Of all the features of Nazi language, its emotionalism is probably the most characteristic and pervasive. Emotion feigned or unfeigned suffuses the literature and rhetoric of the Party. Like the mixing of rhetorical pitches, this too had its

purpose. Again and again Hitler and Goebbels expounded upon the need for propaganda—and by implication language—that would, in Goebbels's words, "unleash anger, and not just touch the intellect of a few."[9] The effect of propaganda, Hitler explained in *Mein Kampf*, "has always to be directed more and more towards the feeling, and only to a certain extent to so-called reason." For this cause Hitler ridiculed the language of publications by the Social Democratic party, language which, he claimed, tended to lose its readers in a "labyrinth of reason."[10] By contrast, he and Goebbels and their subordinates developed what the propaganda minister called "a new and modern language," an impassioned and provocative jargon of propaganda tailored to the Party's political goals and calculated to spark and fan the flames of fanaticism and hysteria necessary to propel the Movement.[11]

The pith of this supposedly novel language consisted of slogans. Lumley, Hertzler, and other analysts have set forth in considerable detail most of the major properties of slogans, both commercial and political; and some of them, such as the following, apply particularly well to the Nazi variety.[12]

Euphony. To be effective, slogans should glide smoothly off the tip of a tongue. *Volk ohne Raum* and *Kraft durch Freude*, for example, seem to meet this requirement. Preferably slogans should have an almost musical cadence, as in *Deutschland erwache, Juda verrecke!* and *Mit unseren Fahnen ist der Sieg!* Better yet, they should also make use of alliteration and assonance, as in *Ehre der Arbeit* and *Räder rollen für den Sieg.* As with a singsong poem, the sound of an euphonic slogan often exceeds in importance whatever meager meaning it may contain. Indeed, one might argue that a slogan should not so much convey a meaning as make an agreeable noise.

Command, Exhortation, Guidance. A good slogan, Lumley has suggested, is not an invitation to think but a call to arms and action: *Über Gräber vorwärts!* ("Forward over graves!") *Führer befiel, wir folgen!* ("*Führer* command, we'll follow!") Or, in times of tribulation and travail, it may offer encouragement and exhort the faithful to struggle on to victory. For instance, the slogan *Wo der Führer ist, ist der Sieg*—"Where there is the *Führer*, there is victory"—appeared in the German press on the day before Hitler's suicide and amid the most desperate of predicaments for the Third Reich.[13] Or again, sometimes a slogan identifies for those otherwise too dense to perceive it a goal to be attained—*Für das dritte grosse Reich*—or an enemy to be smashed—*Die Juden sind unser Unglück.*

Brevity and Repetition. Short slogans are the best slogans. Seldom do these surpass six or seven words, and often they include

as few as two or three: *Berlin Voran!*, *Freiheit und Brot*, *Blut und Boden*, *Hitler über Deutschland*. Brevity, like euphony, makes a slogan easier to remember and utter. The more easily remembered and uttered by the masses, the more often repeated; the more often repeated, the greater the chance of a slogan succeeding. "In general, under the pressure of repetition and shouting, in the case of large numbers of individuals, the mind submits; it escapes into apathy and empty conformity," observed Joyce Hertzler in *A Sociology of Language*.[14] Except for the apathy, this in fact is the impression one gets from viewing old films of Nazi party congresses, in which row upon row of soldiers and Hitler Youth stand before their Leader, chanting over and over in unison: *Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer!* The whole scene resembles a primitive ritual, and as in primitive rituals, the repetition could apparently induce in participants a sort of hypnotic trance. With perfect justice, therefore, Hitler could acclaim himself the Nazi party's "chief drummer."[15] What he was drumming into followers' minds was a succession of emotion-laden slogans.

Those slogans were packed with explosive words generally known by the name of *Schlagworte*. Usually translated as "slogan" or "catchword," *Schlagwort* might better be rendered "strike word" or "hit word." What it struck was the listener, crippling him with a kind of mental paralysis if he happened to be an enemy to the cause, driving him onward into mindless (but far from aimless) action if he was a friend. In a revealing little treatise on propaganda, one of Goebbels's assistants, Eugen Hadamovsky, himself a talented agitator, elucidated the origin and the Pavlovian purpose of these inflammatory terms:

> The French revolution set in motion the era of the struggles of the masses. The chivalrous game of politics played by the governments with limited stakes gave way to the movement of masses and nations who threw everything into the fight. The refined old language of diplomacy yielded to the earthy and impetuous terminology of political mass propaganda. The political jargon became a matter of public concern.
>
> Liberty, equality, fraternity, capitalism, socialism, communism, profit, surplus value, proceeds, world economy, Soviet Germany, nationalism, blood, soil, race, autarchy, the Third Reich, these are some of the slogans [*Schlagworte*] of this language, slogans which by themselves as well as in their derivations and teachings encompass entire *Weltanschauungen*.
>
> They "beat down" on the adversary, pound him, create doubt, fear, repulsion and agreement.
>
> To those who believe in these slogans they appear as positive

> promises of a brighter future; to them they are an intellectual and religious salvation from the blind and purely psychologically oriented struggle of everyday life.[16]

Of words such as these, Hadamovsky added that "each one, by its mere existence, represents propaganda and a spiritual chain; its mere mention arouses positive or negative reactions, causes the flow of energies, and determines our actions."[17]

Like emotional depth charges dropped into a listener's ear and penetrating to the heart, Nazi *Schlagworte* triggered in people the irrational responses sought by the Party. *Novemberverbrecher* (November criminals), for instance, evoked hatred of the Jews and pacifists alleged to have stabbed Germany in the back in 1918. *Schmachfriede* (humiliating peace) evoked hatred of the victors in the First World War and a thirst for revenge which only a repair to arms could slake. During the Second World War *Über-Versailles* (super-Versailles) evoked in Germans the fear that an even more humiliating peace awaited them the second time if they surrendered to the United Nations. *Drittes Reich*, on the other hand, evoked visions of grandeur, even as *Volksgemeinschaft* played upon the longing for release from the loneliness of modern life. *Blut* and *Rasse* aroused racial pride and prejudice, while *Kampf* appealed to the combative side of human nature. "Thought precedes action," Hadamovsky asserted, "and . . . the word gives birth to thought."[18] By planting in people the correct thoughts—or, more precisely, the correct feelings—from which flowed correct actions, the *Schlagworte* served as instruments of social control.

Even more than the other linguistic features and practices I have been examining in Part Two, the emotionalism of Nazi rhetoric indicates clearly the purpose and nature of that "new and modern language" Hitler and Goebbels were evolving. Its primary purpose was to produce dutiful National Socialist subjects by lowering the level of people's consciousness. Lowering the level of consciousness is unquestionably what the Nazis were attempting to do through their "eternal" repetition of emotional slogans and *Schlagworte*. Indeed, in many ways their public language and the manner of its delivery seem a throwback to preliterate speech. Most noticeably and effectively in mass meetings, the words and images the Party employed tended to push men and women backward toward an atavistic state of consciousness, a state in which, to use the phrase of Gustave Le Bon (a writer much admired by Goebbels and possibly perused by the *Führer* himself), people fall "far more under the influence of the

spinal cord than of the brain."[19] In this condition, dominated by a leader or by his surrogate orators, reason suspended, passion raging unchecked, human beings become "excessively credulous" and prone to do things they might flinch from doing if they were acting alone and not as part of a crowd. Primitive men, wrote Sigmund Freud in *Totem and Taboo*, "are *uninhibited*: thought passes directly into action. With them it is rather the deed that is a substitute for the thought."[20] So it was with Germans susceptible to Nazi demagoguery. To drive them directly into action—often unjust action, such as murder or military aggression—without prior reflection was an end to which Nazi agitators turned their attention and their technique.

Party speakers and the journalists and functionaries under Goebbels's guidance were paid to pound slogans into the brains of their German brothers and sisters, paid to nurture a nation of fanatics and true believers on the pabulum of *goodthink*. Day by day these technicians of deceit exerted themselves to convert the German language into an agent of intellectual darkness, and in some measure they succeeded. To some appearances, at least, they transformed Germany into a society very like an Orwellian slogan world, a world in which, in many ways, *doublethink* reigned without restraint. Certainly the language they concocted aided indispensably in the practice of doublethink. Here was a form of discourse in which, with no apparent awareness of contradicting themselves, Goebbels could speak of "simple pomp" and an anonymous security official could express alarm at growing popular sentiment for "liberalization of the freedom of the Press."[21]

Seldom have rhetoric and reality been such complete strangers to one another as they sometimes were in the Third Reich. Rhetoric depicted a free and harmonious *Volksgemeinschaft*; in reality the iron arm of a terror state enforced mass conformity. Rhetoric exalted as the ideal Party type the blonde brute of Nordic birth; in reality many leading Nazis, most notably Hitler and Goebbels, were far from being the physical paragons of Party mythology (the clubfooted Goebbels was derisively nicknamed Mahatma Propagandhi). Rhetoric proclaimed the primitive virtues of blood, soil, and peasant vitality; in reality the regime's policy of rapid rearmament, which gave tremendous impetus to industrialization and the growth of towns and cities, furthered the impoverishment of rural life and the rise of the urban "asphalt man" so dreaded and stigmatized by Alfred Rosenberg. Rhetoric portrayed the Party as protector of the family; in reality the Party considered family loyalties a barrier to totalitarian rule, for which reason many National Socialist policies and institutions, such as the

Hitler Youth, were designed to undermine parental authority and to diminish private life. Thus the gap between what was said and what was done was great, and with the coming of war it grew greater still. At no time was it wider than at the very end, when Goebbels, on the eve of Hitler's last birthday, delivered a final radio address to the nation. In this parting speech the propaganda minister flipped reality on its head, holding out hope for victory in spite of impending defeat, praising the German armed forces for having brought peace and happiness wherever they marched, and eulogizing Hitler as the savior of Western civilization, an architect of peace who would yet prove to be "the man of this century."[22]

Whether by this time many of his listeners were prepared to believe Goebbels is doubtful, for in fact Nazi German had already lost much of its power to influence mass thinking and kindle popular passions.

PART THREE

COMMUNIST DISCOURSE

CHAPTER SIX

THE PROBLEM OF A "COMMUNIST LANGUAGE"

Today, three-quarters of a century after Vladimir Ilyich Lenin "put out the lights" on the democratically elected Constituent Assembly of Russia, half a century after Joseph Stalin's purges, and little more than the morning after the slaughter of students and workers on the Avenue of Eternal Peace in Beijing, it is still possible to find people in both East and West, and not all of them Communists by any means, who regard the Marxist-Leninist variety of communism as a force for freedom and progress in the world. Like Rasputin, illusions die hard. Without doubt the language of Communist parties and regimes, which from their beginnings have borrowed and debased the vocabulary of the more moderate Left, has done as much as anything to keep alive the illusions of our age about Marxism-Leninism.

Consider some obvious and well-known incongruities. Historically, Communist parties have often extolled democracy while staging rigged elections

in countries they control. They have ruled in the name of workers while denying them in practice the right to strike. Proclaiming themselves the most progressive and humane of all political parties, they have thundered against exploitation while perfecting systems of forced labor. They have always professed to champion the independence of peoples and nations, and yet for many years the Soviet Union, preeminent among Communist states, held half of Europe in vassalage. In fine, the words and deeds of Communists have often diverged radically. Even so, as Orwell used to complain, Communists have never lacked for apologists in the liberal democracies; fellow travelers and misguided idealists—admittedly their numbers have been dwindling of late—have all too easily overlooked the deeds and fed upon the words. Even if we had no interest in language as a tool of control in totalitarian societies, this disquieting phenomenon should suggest the need for studying Communist discourse. Add to it the importance that Communists themselves attach to language—Stalin, like Goebbels, called it an instrument of struggle, and Lenin stated that the Communist party's most critical task was "the selection of language"[1]—and we have compelling reasons for investigating Communist linguistic practices.

In the next three chapters, therefore, I examine some specific features of Communist discourse and then, in concluding, move from particulars to generalities in defining what I consider to be its central characteristics. My argument is that the language of "orthodox" communism—the communism exemplified by Lenin and Stalin's Russia, Mao's China, Castro's Cuba, Honecker's Germany—has three related functions. First, it is supposed to fan mass enthusiasm for Communist parties and their policies. Second, it is supposed to distort reality—or, which is all the same, to impose on the popular mind what the Soviets call a Marxist-Leninist *mirovozzreniye* or world outlook. Finally, the language of orthodox communism is intended to foster in those who speak it and are exposed to it incessantly an uncritical intellect, a reduced mental condition in which they can do little more than assent to their complete domination by the state. How well it succeeds or how abysmally it fails in all these aims is a question I defer answering until Part Four.

Obviously there are problems in making such an argument, and the most obvious problem of all concerns the dramatic events unfolding in the Communist world, and in particular the Soviet Union, since the middle 1980s. These events may appear to invalidate the argument that Communist language is somehow totalitarian. For when, as is now the case in the Soviet Union, citizens can speak their minds

more or less freely in public, when popularly elected representatives can criticize with impunity the head of the secret police, and when the works of Solzhenitsyn and Orwell can be legally published and widely discussed in the periodical press, the label "totalitarian" no longer seems to fit. With the advent of *glasnost* and "new thinking" the Soviet Union has become a much more open society, and official Soviet language, mirroring the transformation, has itself become more open. Far from being used to deceive the masses, as we would expect if it were anything like Newspeak, it appears in many respects to be giving them a reasonably truthful picture of reality; and far from conveying a monolithic will and a single orthodox outlook, it often expresses a remarkable variety of viewpoints, some of them harshly self-critical. Moreover, as relatively liberal reforms take root and the language of the ruling class grows more heterodox and honest, it seems that the meanings of words like "democracy" and "freedom," hitherto employed with such dishonesty by the regime, have begun to move into line with the Western understanding of these terms; no longer, at any rate, do the terms serve as mere synonyms for dictatorship and repression.[2] Plainly, then, the language of Soviet Communism has ceased to resemble Newspeak, if indeed it ever did. For that reason, one might argue, it makes less and less sense for political scientists—whose main concern, after all, should be present-day politics—to dwell upon the language of Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism, a form of political discourse more characteristic of Stalin's or Brezhnev's government than the government of Gorbachev. To do so is an exercise in irrelevance.

To be sure, much evidence exists to confirm this cheerful view of recent developments in the Soviet empire. But it would be premature to suppose that the new policy of openness will permanently transform Communist discourse. In the first place, it is not clear to what extent official Soviet language actually has changed since the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev to power. Much of it remains cluttered with ideological clichés, and Gorbachev himself, for all his strictures against threadbare thinking, at times lapses into the ritualized, struggle-for-peace-and-democracy phraseology that has always afflicted Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. But even assuming Soviet language to have grown more open and less closed, how long this change will last is in considerable doubt. It can last only as long as the policy of *glasnost* that gave rise to it, and the permanence of that policy is itself in doubt because from the beginning it has had a purely utilitarian purpose.

In what sense is the policy of *glasnost* utilitarian? To answer that

question, one must keep in mind what Gorbachev considers to be the greatest challenge to his leadership. On becoming general secretary of the Communist party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in 1985, he confronted a Soviet economy torpid from inefficient central management and a bureaucracy not only bloated but ridden with corruption. Worse yet, the revolutionary enthusiasm of earlier years had long since spent itself, leaving a population largely apathetic toward politics and cynical toward the government and the Communist party, whose rhetorical propensity, as Gorbachev readily conceded, has often been to overstate its achievements and understate its failures.[3] The whole situation was critical, threatening as it did not only the prestige of the Party and the belief of the masses in socialism but the continued status of the Soviet Union as a superpower. To "give socialism a second wind"[4]—and thereby to go down in history as its savior, even as Franklin Roosevelt was for many in the West the savior of liberal capitalism—Gorbachev needed to adopt a bold approach. His solution, influenced at least in part by Lenin's New Economic Policy and the reforms of Deng Xiaoping in China, was the now-famous policy of *perestroika* or restructuring, a frontal assault upon the failed system of central economic planning created under Stalin. In order radically to reform this system, however, it was necessary first to discredit it, to publicize its shortcomings. Not only did that require an unaccustomed candor from the leaders; the mass of the people themselves had to be able freely to criticize inept administration and faulty methods of management, to bring to light in the press examples of bureaucratic bungling and "fossilized thinking," even to expose official wrongdoing. In fine, the success of *perestroika* depended upon a new "openness" to criticism and adverse publicity. Only through constant and searching self-examination and the more or less uninhibited expression of public dissatisfaction could the regime hope to put an end to Party complacency, reignite popular enthusiasm, and "mobilise the people for fulfilling the tasks facing the country."[5]

It is in this sense that *glasnost* is a utilitarian policy. Gorbachev does not appear to advocate "openness" and freedom of expression as ends in themselves. Rather, he sees them as means toward the all-important end of rejuvenating socialism (and hence strengthening the grip of the Communist party on power). That pluralism should be pursued for its own sake, or that freedom of expression is something to which people are entitled regardless of its social utility, is a notion foreign to Gorbachev's fundamentally Marxist-Leninist way of thinking about the world. For him, as for his predecessors, such rights as people possess are derived from the state and not—as Jeffer-

son would say—from nature or nature's God. When the state grants freedom to the individual, it does so not because reason or moral law obliges it to, but because for the time being it seems good policy. When it no longer seems good policy—when, as Gorbachev might say, "the motion of the times" demands a more despotic policy—the state may revoke the rights as readily as it conferred them.[6]

Anyone familiar with Soviet history knows that such reversals have occurred before and conceivably could occur again. If, for instance, radical restructuring should fail to revitalize the Soviet economy, it appears possible that Gorbachev or a more doctrinaire successor will abandon that policy and the corollary one of *glasnost* in favor of a more authoritarian approach.[7] (The alternative, undeniably becoming more and more thinkable as the USSR moves toward legalizing opposition parties, would be out-and-out liberal capitalism.) Even if the economy does revive, frustration with other problems—continuing ethnic turmoil in the union, secessionist sentiment in the various constituent republics, rebelliousness among disgruntled social and economic groups—could well occasion a return to Stalinism and thus the end of openness. And the end of openness in society and government would mean the end of openness in language. As long as that possibility exists, there is nothing irrelevant about studying the closed language of Stalinist communism. Indeed, the ease with which Chinese Communist rulers reverted to it in denouncing student demonstrators in the spring of 1989 suggests that this language is still very much with us.

But let us grant that Gorbachev is no totalitarian and that his language nowadays bears less and less resemblance to the language of his predecessors and their allies in other Communist parties.[8] Still, even if this study is limited to the language of communism before the coming of Gorbachev and the disintegration of the Soviet bloc, how can it speak of "the" language of communism, as though there were but one? Have there not in fact been many? Is it not more accurate to speak of a Soviet, a Chinese, a Yugoslav, an Albanian, a Bulgarian Communist language? Or perhaps, to condense these into broader categories, of a Soviet, a "left-revisionist," and a "right-revisionist" language?

Differences of language have indeed divided even the various orthodox Communist parties. If nothing else, the scholar who examines Communist rhetoric runs up against a multiplicity of mother tongues: world communism has always been a polyglot movement. Yet the similarities of language among the more orthodox parties have been considerable—a testimony, perhaps, to the power of ide-

ology and ideological thinking to transcend national cultures. For one thing, all of these parties have used language in much the same fashion. All of them, for instance, have employed an extraordinary range of superlatives to picture to themselves and to the rest of the world the merits of communism and the demerits of capitalism. All of them have perverted the meanings of words. All of them have indulged in name-calling. Most important, all of them have spoken the genuinely international jargon of Marxism-Leninism, a kind of language within language, the Basic English of the movement that renders orthodox Communist rhetoric, no matter in what national tongue it takes form, readily recognizable.

Nor must we forget that for many years Moscow dominated the world Communist movement. This too created conditions for a shared vocabulary. Many members of the East European parties, for example, received their early training and indoctrination in Soviet Russia, and back with them to their countries, especially after the Second World War and in the wake of the Red Army, they carried a sizable stock of specifically Soviet terms. Indeed, perhaps as much as a third of the official terminology in countries like East Germany came to consist of Russian loanwords. For many years, moreover, the Soviets promoted and pressed for the teaching of Russian as a second language in East Europe.[9] Inevitably, therefore, the Soviet style and idiom influenced the speech of other orthodox parties, even the Chinese and American, thus establishing much common linguistic ground.

To the extent that peculiarities of jargon have existed among the Marxist-Leninist parties, we may think of these as differences of dialect. Maoist rhetoric, for instance, is notable for having a greater degree of militance and bluster than the rhetoric of the post-Stalin leadership in Russia. In their discourse the Chinese Communists also have frequently conjured images of demons, ghosts, ghouls, and other unearthly entities, images oddly at variance with strict dialectical materialism and having no equivalent in the Soviet dialect. Thus, in a pensive mood Mao Tse-tung once looked forward to his eventual demise as an opportunity for "meeting Marx" (*jian makesi*), a plum of a phrase which became a Chinese euphemism for death. No such expression exists in Soviet language. But all such differences are minor and probably reflect not only local peculiarities but different stages of political and social development. What binds the dialects is much more significant than what separates them. One Marxist-Leninist party may speak Moscow-Communist, another Beijing-Communist, yet another Havana-Communist or St. George's-

Communist; the large common denominator in all of these is the "Communist." In spite of the wide diversity among the parties, then, there would seem to have been—and to some extent still is—such a thing as what Mao called "the common language of the communist world outlook."[10]

I therefore treat Communist language conceptually as the language of a single regime or constitution of government and society, a regime that one might characterize as totalitarian, orthodox, hard-line, Stalinist, or Marxist-Leninist communism. Note that these adjectives restrict the scope of my inquiry. I exclude from consideration the language of the Yugoslav and other Communist parties that appeared early on to have made their peace with the West, overhauled their ideology, and even advocated or adopted on a limited scale and with a clear conscience capitalist techniques of production and distribution. If we take Soviet communism (at any rate up to the middle 1980s) as the lodestar for comparison, such parties are neither totalitarian, orthodox, hard-line, Stalinist, nor Marxist-Leninist, though, of course, they may still practice repression and talk vaguely of attaining in the future a state of pure communism. This study examines only the official language of the Soviet Union from Lenin's time to Chernenko's, of East Germany and Cuba, and of mainland China under Mao; references to "Communists" or "Communist language" pertain to these Communist states and their parties. (No doubt the analysis applies as well to other Marxist-Leninist states, present or past, such as Ethiopia and Czechoslovakia, but I have not researched these extensively.) I do not mean to discount the important political differences that exist even within this limited constellation of Communist states and parties; I only focus upon their use of language, giving particular attention to the Soviet Russian dialect.

One might protest that even this focus is not sharp enough, that it fails to take into account some critical differences between the language of Stalin's era, say, and that of Brezhnev's. Certainly it is true that Soviet and Marxist-Leninist language in general has changed over time, as every spoken language must. Lasswell and Leites have documented one or two of the more consequential changes in *Language of Politics*.[11] It is also true that individual Communist leaders have cultivated different rhetorical styles. On the surface, at least, it is hard to see what the monotonic deliveries of Brezhnev and Chernenko can have in common with the shoe-thumping flamboyance of Khrushchev. Yet the amount of stability and uniformity in Soviet discourse has been striking. Continuities have overshadowed the few radical departures, perhaps reflecting in some degree the essential

rigidity of Communist thought. As Lenin himself acknowledged, the tendency toward ritualistic repetition of slogans, for example, was apparent in Bolshevik language even before the overthrow of the Provisional Government. Even Khrushchev's aberrational attempts at unhackneyed eloquence were mostly intended for Western microphones; at Party congresses and plenary sessions, he generally fell back on formula language and prepared scripts. For the most part, the speakers of Soviet language have displayed precious little originality or eccentricity of speech.[12] The language, in fact, has always been readily identifiable by its tone, its texture, its words, and the ways in which these words are used. We may call it Stalinist language, as some have done, so long as it is understood that the language of Stalin's government was only the extreme expression of linguistic tendencies that existed in Bolshevism from its beginnings and persisted in Soviet public life for more than three decades after Stalin's death. It is therefore not ahistorical to lump together with the language of Stalin the language of Lenin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev. In spite of certain differences in style and manner, their language is fundamentally alike and has the same purpose. The fact that Stalin made significant departures in policy from Lenin, or Khrushchev from Stalin, should not obscure the similarities of speech. These similarities should help to simplify the task of analyzing Marxist-Leninist discourse.

There is one other difficulty—or rather, one other critic—with which to grapple before beginning an inquiry into Communist language. Suppose an orthodox Communist were to read the argument set forth in this chapter, that Marxist-Leninist discourse is an instrument of domination. Naturally he would not agree with the argument, but on what grounds? He might object as follows:

"Your baseless assertions about a so-called 'Communist language' betray the most profoundly petit-bourgeois prejudices. It is all very well to show, as you did in your previous chapters, that the fascists try to deprive people of the ability to think. The whole world knows what a brutish 'ideal' of 'humanity' the Hitlerites cherished. But to pretend that Communists aim at the same thing is nothing less than a travesty of the truth! The Communist party seeks only the enlightenment of its members and of the toiling masses, a fact irrefutably proven by the phenomenal rise in literacy rates in backward countries where Communists come to power.

"Obviously you have not read Marx and Lenin with discernment. Otherwise you would know that Communist teaching puts a premium on thought and rationality. Marxism-Leninism, after all, is a true sci-

ence, and science presupposes cogitation, analysis, reasoning. And, if I may reverse Marx's order, a good Communist is someone who not only changes the world but also interprets it—someone, that is to say, who thinks about it. Far from resembling the mindless cannibals celebrated by nazism, he has mastered the principles of Marxist-Leninist theory, of philosophical materialism, and applies them creatively in revolutionary practice and in the search for solutions to social problems. He does not rest content with the knowledge acquired through years of training and study but struggles constantly and resolutely to expand it. Nor does he selfishly try to monopolize this knowledge. Rather, fully cognizant of his socialist duty, he uses it to lift the masses above the level of trade-union consciousness, to teach them the laws of social development and of objective material reality, and to inspire them with confidence in the final victory of the working peoples over their oppressors. Is this mindlessness? No, and again, no!

"Experience therefore contradicts your absurd argument that 'Communist language' is intended to diminish thought. On the contrary, the person who employs this language is a thinker, albeit a thinker of a higher type than any which bourgeois culture is capable of producing."

The following three chapters are largely an effort to answer the objections of this hypothetical Communist. In a preliminary manner, though, one might reply to him in this vein:

While literacy rates do tend to rise in backward countries that turn Communist, the reason for this has little to do with enlightening the masses. It has more to do with priming them for propaganda and indoctrination. In their more candid moments Communists themselves implicitly acknowledge this. "An illiterate person," wrote Lenin, "stands outside politics."[13] Without an education of sorts, who could read the state-controlled newspapers or a Party tract? Who could make sense of the Party's polysyllabic jargon? Who then could be molded into a "new socialist man"?

As for the claim that Communists are scientists and thinkers, it does contain a trace of truth. For admittedly the writing of Marx and Engels presents their followers with a rationalistic ideology, though not an authentically scientific one, and this is surely part of its attraction for people who in an earlier age might have felt altogether at home among the Schoolmen. At least in theory, a person who pores over Marx's works will be moved to meditate on their message and on the nature of reality. Further, there survives a sort of tradition, dating back to the time of Marx and Engels and the first two socialist internationals, but almost forgotten nowadays, of the think-

ing Communist, the activist in overalls who leaps from barricade to barricade clutching a spanner in one hand and a copy of *Das Kapital* in the other.

The Bolshevik party dealt this tradition a crippling blow when it seized power in Russia, created the Third International as a pliant instrument of Soviet foreign policy, and proceeded to offer itself as the model and guide for Communist parties of other countries.[14] There began to emerge in many nations a new kind of Communist, a professional revolutionary whose allegiance belonged to Moscow as center of the world revolution and who placed organization and discipline above doctrine. If one can credit the accounts of such former members of Communist parties as Whittaker Chambers and Arthur Koestler, this sort of Communist obeyed all orders and surrendered to the leadership of the Party the right to think his own thoughts. For no matter how many resolutions the Party passed exhorting members to "deepen" their knowledge and "master the principles of Marxism-Leninism," it fell finally to the leaders or Leader—in Russian the *Vozhd* or Boss—to lay down the Party line and authoritatively interpret the sacred teachings, sometimes twisting or completely perverting them in the process.[15] At least during periods of the worst Stalinist excesses, it often seems that when the *Vozhd* had spoken, a shudder of acceptance descended the hierarchical ladder: from the Politburo and the Central Committee down to the lowliest agitator in the remotest rural soviet, all had to approve with enthusiasm. Those who questioned the latest gloss on the gospel or raised the issue of fidelity to original doctrines were dismissed as "Talmudists" and "textualists" and sometimes given a taste of the Gulag. Under these circumstances, to ponder very long over the classical Communist writings and commentaries upon them invites suspicion and perhaps even a midnight rapping at one's door. For this reason Mao Tse-tung used to advise comrades to study Marxism "modestly": "Books on Marxism should be read, but not too many of them. . . . When one reads too much, one is liable to go to extremes and become a bookworm dogmatist or revisionist."[16]

So much for the thinking Communist. Party literature from Lenin's time onward has more often praised, and Party training more often attempted to produce, the "staunch" and "faithful" Communist, the zealot equipped with what Mao called "a firm and correct political orientation."[17] The exemplary Communist has not mastered a science but a set of slogans and formulas that eliminate the need for thought and reflection. His language furnishes the best evidence of this.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY

The decline of the thinking Communist and his replacement by pragmatic Party leaders and intellectually passive followers might seem to have augured the end of ideology as a cardinal influence in Communist affairs. That has not happened. Ideology remains even now a formidable factor, at least in the relative handful of Communist states whose parties cling to a monopoly of power. For whether or not the members of Communist inner circles themselves actually believe in an ideology—and that is an open question—they can ill afford to repudiate it publicly. It is one of the few things besides brute force that hold their system together, imparting as it does a measure of legitimacy to total dictatorship.[1] Not only does ideology justify the original violent convulsion through which the Communists overturn an ancient order or a lawfully constituted government; it justifies as well the Party's continuing repression of the populace. World imperialism and its agents, or so

the ideology teaches, will never relent in their desperate efforts to sabotage the Revolution, and in consequence no workers' state can relax for an instant its "revolutionary vigilance" against enemies within and without. The workers' gains must be safeguarded even at the price of so-called civil liberties.

Ideology has also shaped the language of the Communist parties. To the extent that ideology exists to mobilize mass support for communism and to intensify mass antagonism toward communism's enemies, so does the language. The language, in fact, takes much of its coloring and character from the ideology, and many features of Communist discourse correspond closely to particular tenets of Marxism-Leninism. Here one can look at only a few of the more important features and link them with the Marxist-Leninist worldview, bearing always in mind that the main concern is not with explicating the ideology but with demonstrating how Communist language buttresses both its logic and some of its themes.

The Two Camps

For the orthodox Communist, history in its most fundamental sense is a series of class struggles. Through the millenia of recorded time, wrote Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, the "oppressor and oppressed" have "stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes." In the present epoch the relations and antagonisms among classes have so simplified themselves that there now exist, according to Marx and Engels, only "two great hostile camps, . . . two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat."[2]

In various ways Lenin and his successors amended Marx's teachings, but they retained essentially intact the concept of two camps. In the Leninist worldview, though, the struggle between camps plays itself out in a wider arena: not only within states but among them, not only between classes but between societies, those governed by "imperialists" and those governed by "socialists." The first Soviet constitution, ratified in 1924, gave legal embodiment to this Manichaean dogma. Characteristically for Communist rhetoric, the opening articles of this document paint in stark strokes the contrast between the two camps:

> There, in the camp of Capitalism: national hate and inequality, colonial slavery and chauvinism, national oppression and massacres, brutalities and imperialistic wars.
>
> Here, in the camp of Socialism: reciprocal confidence and peace, national liberty and equality, the pacific co-existence and fraternal collaboration of peoples.[3]

Perhaps solely for the sake of variety in an otherwise unvarying theme, Communist spokesmen frequently talk not of two camps but of two "zones," two "roads," two "paths," two "forces" in the world—sometimes labeled imperialism and socialism, sometimes reaction and progress, sometimes aggression and peace; or of two "systems," two "ideologies," two "parallel world markets." But in all of these expressions the central idea is the same. For the committed Communist it is not plurality but duality that governs the globe. Every problem, every argument, every issue resolves itself ultimately into two sides, and only two: a "bourgeois" and a "socialist" side. And in these conflicts there can be no neutrals. "Every person," Lenin insisted, "must take either this, our, side or the other side."[4]

The "either-or" terminology occurs in Communist literature almost with the regularity of a pulse beat. Here, for example, is Fidel Castro in a speech commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion: "The option between the past and the future, reaction or progress, treason or loyalty to principles, capitalism or socialism, imperialist domination or liberation, was what was decided at Girón on April 19, 1961."[5] Notice the juxtaposition of opposites: past-future, reaction-progress, capitalism-socialism. Multiple dozens of such dichotomies appear in Party polemical literature, reinforcing the "two camps" doctrine and rhetorically precluding the possibility of a third force or a third choice. (See appendix D.)

Consider the implications of this neatly fractured view of the world. If at bottom there are but two sides to the critical questions of our time, if no one can be neutral on these questions, and if the Communists and their allies and sympathizers compose one side—then who composes the other? Obviously everyone else falls into the opposite camp, if not by volition then by dint of "objective" historical circumstances. But this means that reactionaries, fascists, Nazis, the Kuomintang, Tories, laissez-faire liberals, welfare-state liberals, social democrats, Constitutional Democrats, Mensheviks, Anarchists, Syndicalists, Trotskyites—in fine, every anti-Communist, most other non-Communists, and just about every unorthodox Communist one could name—must make up the capitalist camp. Yet without ques-

tion a great gulf separates some of these supposedly allied groups and persons. Is a Trotskyite, for instance, in any sense a capitalist? Does a liberal have anything in common with a fascist? Is it fair to place Winston Churchill and George Orwell in the same camp with Hitler and Marshal Pétain?

Perhaps the more sophisticated Communist ideologues are capable when necessary of making mental distinctions among the diverse groups, nations, and persons they place in the capitalist camp. Perhaps with one part of their minds they even recognize the unreality of the official Manichaean worldview; perhaps at the highest levels and in the most secret councils of Communist governments the rulership discards the two-camps doctrine and takes into full account the actual complexity of human affairs. At least implicitly the Soviets appeared to be doing this in former years when they attempted, as in their propaganda campaign against the deployment of American cruise missiles in Europe, to drive wedges into the NATO alliance. Perhaps we shall never know exactly how seriously leading Communists have taken their capitalist-communist dichotomy. But in the meantime it seems safe to say that at least for propaganda purposes Communists must often blast away the barriers between their enemies. Before the judgment bar of History all must be made equally culpable; the Communist party alone must be the bearer of peace and light and truth. Here is where language comes in. For like the Nazis, Communists have often resorted to verbal devices that obliterate every crucial distinction among their adversaries and assign them one and all to the same negative category.

One of these devices is a technique long used by revolutionaries and agitators of all shades to slur their enemies: simply coin or borrow a devil-term and tack it on indiscriminately to all of one's adversaries. The noun-adjective "reactionary," for instance, calls up such unpleasant images in the mass mind that any person or party seeking popular support must avoid the dread label at all costs. For everyone knows that reactionaries brandish bludgeons and strut about in jackboots and leather, foam at the mouth at mention of equality and progress, rage impotently against novelty and innovation, and would turn back the clock if they could. Nobody wishes to be numbered among such an indecent breed, and thus the Communists, like other radical groups, have labeled as reactionary almost everything and everybody they dislike. Only with much difficulty, in fact, could one reckon up the number of people, philosophies, ideas, and institutions they have stigmatized with the term at one time or another. In spite

of a tendency to apply it with exceeding imprecision, however, the Party does manage to annex to the word a peculiar sense and logic which few people besides Party members can fully appreciate. To be reactionary in the Communist sense is to oppose Progress. Progress lies in the flow of History toward the classless society. In the final stage of that progression the Communist party acts as History's agent. Therefore to oppose the Party is to oppose History and Progress and thus to be a reactionary, regardless of how generous and humane one's intentions and subjective impulses may be.

"Imperialist," "capitalist," "bourgeoisie," "petit bourgeoisie," and "fascist" have similarly elastic properties. So does "counterrevolutionary," the traditional favorite of Communist propagandists. For example, the persons and factions that tried and failed to dislodge the Bolsheviks in the first few days after Lenin's group vaulted into power in November 1917 were collectively branded "counterrevolutionary."[6] It mattered nothing that many of them had earlier fought to overthrow the czar and to establish socialism. The Soviets never ceased flinging this epithet at their enemies. It is a cruel irony, and an "error" only now beginning to be corrected in Russian history books, that Makhno's anarchists, the Socialist Revolutionaries, the Kronstadt mutineers of 1921, Trotsky and his followers, and Alexander Dubcek and Lech Walesa and theirs—reformers or revolutionaries all of them—have wound up in the same rogues' gallery with General Deniken and the dictator Batista y Zaldívar.

But again, as with "reactionary," there is a sort of logic in this use of "counterrevolutionary." Communists by their own doctrine are the only "genuine" revolutionaries, the only party in touch and in tune with historical reality and able to lead the workers to triumph over the class enemy. To resist the Party, whatever one's motives and however great one's love of the people may be, is therefore "objectively" to resist the Revolution as well. He who breaks solidarity with the Party has leaped over the lines into the counterrevolutionary camp.

But sometimes a single inflated word may not be enough to make that point, especially when the counterrevolutionary in question has devoted his life to the Revolution and carries impeccable proletarian credentials. Trotsky and Zinoviev counterrevolutionaries? Bukharin and Radek? What Soviet citizen with vivid recollections of 1905 and 1917 could have credited such charges? But during the great terror of the 1930s, Soviet propagandists got around the absurdity of them by barraging the public with talk of betrayal, treason, and treachery. There is no way of knowing for certain, but it seems likely that at

least some minds were convinced of their truth, not by force of fact and reason but by endless repetition of the charges, unanswered in the one-party press.

The technique involved here requires little sophistication but much malice. Lenin used it to discredit the leaders of the Second International, while Stalin and official Soviet historians honed it to perfection in the first edition of the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, also known by its subtitle, the *Short Course*. The technique works as follows: When a Kautsky or an Attlee offers a middle way between capitalist democracy and proletarian dictatorship, or when a Trotsky or a Tito challenges the policies of the *Vozhd*, simply smear the dissenter's good socialist name. Ignore his record and his motives and accuse him of "desertion to the bourgeois camp." Call him a "petty-bourgeois traitor to Marxism." Accuse him of having "joined forces with world capital." To make him appear more secretive and sinister, speak darkly of his "collaboration" with the capitalist enemy. Portray the wretch as a "bourgeois agent in the working-class movement." Let the people know that he acts (as *Pravda* once said of George Orwell) "on the orders and instigation of Wall Street."[7] Darken his character still more by saying that he has "sold himself to the bourgeoisie," that he has taken bribes from imperialism and acted as its agent in trying to subvert the Revolution. Or belittle him as a bootlicking "lackey" of the capitalist class.[8] And if someone out of reach of the censor and the secret police should produce facts to refute the charges of treason, bribery, and bootlicking, assert that no matter what the alleged traitor's words and motives may reveal, he is at any rate "objectively" for the bourgeoisie, "virtually" their agent, a bootlicker "in the last analysis."[9] In sum, rig the terms of disputation so that he ends up in the capitalist camp in any case.

We should not underestimate the effect of language like this upon the many misinformed citizens in totalitarian societies and upon alienated intellectuals in free ones. It often makes surprising impressions. Even some of the more sober-minded liberals in America and Britain in the 1930s believed for a time the tales that were told of a "Trotskyite-Fascist" conspiracy. But the duping of Western intellectuals, important as it is to Communist political strategy, has never been the principal purpose of bipolar language. The principal purpose is to promote a two-dimensional view of the world, whether or not Communist leaders themselves actually hold such a view. Through the myth of the rapacious imperialist, the Communist *terribles simplificateurs* have managed to focus upon a single omnipresent enemy the anxieties and animosities of the masses, whose emotions

and bodies the proletarian dictators have sought to harness in building and oiling their military machines and in collectivizing their economies. Documents seized in the American invasion of Grenada, for instance, show that the New Jewel government of Maurice Bishop deliberately emphasized in its propaganda "the pressures of imperialism" as a way of stimulating greater socialist productivity by the population.[10] Without the stimulus of a bipolar ideology with its ready-made objects of hatred, it would be much more difficult to exact from the masses the measure of devotion to duty that totalitarianism requires. As long as they can be persuaded that an enemy menaces their lives and their homeland, the multitudes will make the otherwise incomprehensible sacrifices their rulers demand of them. But should they realize that imperialist domination is not the only alternative to a Communist police state—that bipolar ideology and reality, in other words, do not match—then nothing but bludgeons and barbed wire can coax them into obedience, and a very negative form of it at that. With good reason, therefore, the spokesmen for Communist governments choose their words with calculation and care and with an eye to maintaining the two-toned image of reality.

Vilification, Ridicule, and the Role of Hate

Through verbal effects one can create with relative ease a momentary impression of Manichaean conflict. But to turn impression into belief, to make people feel in their bones that in the forms of communism and capitalism good and evil have joined battle to the bitter finish, Communist propagandists require additional words and phrases. Thus they have built up through the decades a sizable arsenal of hate words to hurl when need arises, as it often does, at enemies of the Party. By accentuating the sinfulness of the capitalist and his collaborators, these words of wrath highlight the humanity and nobility of the Communist. Roughly speaking, there are four kinds of Communist name-calling, corresponding to four distinct groups selected for besmirchment: the capitalist-imperialists, their reactionary tools and lackeys around the world, socialists who "play into the hands of" the imperialists, and traitors to the Party. For each of these groups the Communists have coined a vocabulary of vilification and ridicule unsurpassed in its pungency.

In the Commmunist caricature of the "imperialist"—an abstraction for Western governments and the capitalist classes that run them—he is a creature of incomparable ferocity and madness. Only negative

superlatives, such as "the most evil suppressor of peoples' freedom," can even come close to capturing his villainy.[11] Described variously as "vindictive," "dirty," and "arrogant," he allegedly "misleads," "blackmails," and "terrorizes" the peaceloving peoples of the world and "imposes regimes" upon unwilling nations.[12] "He," however, is sometimes not a single nefarious soul but several. For a favorite trick in Communist polemics is to stereotype the capitalist opposition as a powerful clique, usually posing as democrats, that dominates the masses by deception and by gendarme terror. Hence the profusion in Party literature of phrases like "the finance oligarchy," "the monopoly bourgeoisie," "the Pentagon war party."[13] Out of greed and folly these "ruling circles" of the West endeavor to "whip up the arms race" and enrich themselves by exploiting the underdeveloped countries.

In these crimes the imperialists never lack for partners. Somehow they can always recruit in the countries they seek to subjugate a plenitude of "puppets" and "stooges" who think nothing of "selling out" or "kowtowing" to them.[14] In Soviet Russia before the collectivization of farms the imperialists linked up with the kulaks, labeled by Lenin "profiteers" and "vampires."[15] In Mao's China they connived with the rich, the landlords, and the reactionary intellectuals—or, as the Chairman and his followers preferred to call these groups, "bull monsters and snake spirits" (*niu-kuei she-shen*), "devils," and "parasitic worms."[16] In Afghanistan during the 1980s the imperialists were well served by the resistance fighters, known in the Soviet press of that time as "bandits" and "hired killers."[17]

Aside from these obviously reactionary types, the imperialists have often received aid and comfort from a less likely quarter: the international socialist movement. Over the years, it seems, an assortment of fools and rogues has risen to prominence in the labor parties of various countries and in such associated groups as the Second International. Whether by wicked design or by gross folly, these pseudo-socialists often have done the bidding of imperialism, supporting its wars of plunder and opposing violent revolution in favor of peaceful reforms that could only mollify the masses and thus strengthen the grip on society of the capitalist classes and cliques. Partly for this reason Communists denounce them (except in popular-front periods when socialists of this sort make useful allies) with as much animosity and spleen as they denounce the imperialist himself. But sometimes their tirades mix into the usual vilification the salt of ridicule and sarcasm. Lenin, for example, made sport of "the learned fools and the old women of the Second International," on many occasions singling out Karl Kautsky as an object of derision. Lenin dismissed his rival

for the mantle of Marx as a mere "snivelling philistine democrat," a "sentimental fool" and "simpleton."[18] Through such derisive language rather than through rational discourse he attempted to destroy Kautsky's credibility as a leader and theoretician of the socialist movement. No doubt he also hoped by jeering at them to silence Kautsky and his followers. "Ridicule," Frederick the Great observed in a letter to Voltaire, "is more deadly than all the arguments in the world. Few men can reason, but all fear ridicule." Recognizing this, Lenin and his successors fashioned it into as sharp an instrument of totalitarian polemics as any that exists.[19]

The Kautskys and Hilferdings might at least plead stupidity. Not so the Bukharins and Trotskys and Lin Piaos. Their dispute with the Party went far beyond mere muddleheadedness. It entailed outright treason. These black souls once embraced the Communist creed, sat in the highest councils of the Party, beheld with their own eyes the Soviet or the Chinese Communist Canaan, and occupied exalted posts in its government: all the more execrable, then, their fall from the faith, and all the more dangerous their dissent from the Party line. By threatening to fracture the Party, the brightest hope of the human race, their heresy gladdened the heart and increased the confidence of the capitalist enemy, and this made them the worst scoundrels of all. Hence the frenzied characterizations of dissident Party members as "swindlers," "Judases," "freaks," and—in the words of one rage-choked Stalinist—"wrecker-diversionist-spy-scum-riffraff-fascist beasts in human form."[20]

In thus smearing their opponents the Communists turned to their account the so-called albatross technique of propaganda: figuratively hang a hate word—"imperialist," "bloodsucker," "leech," or the like—around an enemy's neck, repeat it constantly until it sticks in the consciousness and subconsciousness of the masses, and soon, even against their will, people begin responding to that enemy as they respond to the word itself: with negative feelings, perhaps even with nausea. This seems a simple procedure, and so it is, but it conforms in full with Pavlov's principle of conditioned reflexes.

Lenin well understood and artfully employed the albatross technique. As early as 1907 he excused and advocated as a tactic against splinter groups "the use of the most offensive and contemptuous mode of expression, which puts everything in the worst light."[21] Applied to renegades, such language "solidifies" the Party by discouraging defection and dissidence. Applied to imperialists, it solidifies the nation by diverting popular disdain and loathing away from the regime and channeling them toward an external enemy whose real existence is

less crucial than his presence and place in Communist mythology. Long ago Lumley noted the power of name-calling as a method of social control; and unquestionably when Communists commit character assassination, they are trying to mobilize and manipulate public opinion for despotic purposes.[22]

Over all of this backbiting and belittlement a larger question looms. Why should "genuine humanists," as Communists like to call themselves, find it necessary to traffic in hatred—as undeniably they do when resorting to language like this? Granted that it galvanizes the faithful and awakens in the masses a proper sense of duty to the state, but how do Communists justify morally and philosophically the incitement to hate?

The answer is that hate, like love, is tied to class. "There will be genuine love of humanity," Mao prophesied, but only "after classes are eliminated all over the world."[23] In the interim it is essential to hate anyone so depraved as to oppose the proletariat and its party; for as Lenin pointed out, "class hatred is the prime mover of revolution." And it is not immoral to make use of it. On the contrary, according to the contingent morality of Marxism-Leninism, expounded upon by Lenin in a speech to the Young Communist League in 1920, whatever advances the cause of communism is moral; only that which hinders it is immoral.[24] Hatred, therefore, insofar as it furthers the decline of capitalism and hastens the coming of the classless society, is a perfectly admissible and moral emotion. And the language of vilification and ridicule, rightly understood, is less a token of the Communist's temporary hatred than a testimony to his abiding compassion.

Preeminence of the Party

The axis on which all life in Communist societies is supposed to turn is the Party and its "proletarian" dictatorship, known in latter years more inclusively as an "all-peoples state." This is no tepid parliamentary party, nor even the Communist party of Marx's conception. It is the ironclad organization of professional revolutionaries conceived and crafted by Lenin. United and powerful, firm and inflexible in its determination to topple the capitalist class and then, having toppled it, to create the world anew, the Party proclaims itself the most advanced and militant section of the proletariat. Without the Party to instruct them and spur them into revolutionary action, the masses—or so Lenin and his disciples asserted—could attain only a "trade-union consciousness"; infatuated with mere reforms that fail to strike

at the root of social evil and unable to apprehend their historical and class interests, the workers without guidance would fall prey to "opportunists" who bait them into making peace with their oppressors. Fortunately the Party in its comprehension of History and its confidence in the strength of the toilers intervenes to enlighten and lead them to victory after victory until at last the Revolution has been fought and won. Whereupon it sets about consolidating the gains of the working class by calling into existence a social order intended to be every bit as "monolithic" in character as the Party itself.

All the supposed attributes of the Party mentioned here—its unity, its strength, its leadership, its superior understanding and wisdom—are reflected in the language Communists use to describe their organization and the state it constructs.

The most important attribute is unity. Without this, nothing could be achieved; their movement splintered, their strength diluted, their ranks confused, the workers would reel in disarray before the class enemy. Expressions roughly synonymous with "unity" include "solidarity," "discipline," "cohesion," and "centralization," all of which terms have been staples of Communist discourse. In *State and Revolution* (1917), for example, Lenin predicted that once in control of Russia the proletariat—that is, the Communists—would establish a "strict, iron discipline backed up by the state power of the armed workers." Later, in *"Left-Wing" Communism—An Infantile Disorder* (1920), composed in the afterglow of Great October, he called on Bolsheviks to maintain "tenacity, discipline, and a single and inflexible will" in order finally to defeat the bourgeoisie, remnants of which, Lenin claimed, were still trying to wreck the Soviet economy.[25] Lenin's comrades took him at his word. At the Tenth Party Congress in April 1921 they passed a resolution forbidding "factionalism" in the Party. Long afterward, even to the end of the 1980s, the Party's apologists were praising it for preserving the "monolithic cohesion of its ranks" and complete "unity of action."[26] Against such a party the enemies of the working class hurl themselves in vain fury.

But it is not just the Party that is monolithic. By extension so are the whole Communist state and its population, upon which the Party is said to act as a "cementing force." Past Soviet rulers, for instance, openly aimed at "integrating" the Party with the masses; the Party, they boasted, had become "intertwined ever more organically into the fabric of social relations."[27] For their part the Soviet people were said to applaud the process and support "unanimously" the leadership of their Leninist stewards.[28] Expressions of unanimity and solidarity are difficult to dodge in Communist literature, and one can readily

multiply examples, all of them symptomatic of a mania for unchallengeable uniformity: "consolidation of the ideological unity of our society," "harmoniously developed people," "social homogeneousness," "cohesion of the Soviet people with the Communist Party."[29] Such phrases summon up an image of people and institutions submerged together in a sort of indissoluble superglue.

From unity flows strength, and Communists never weary of vaunting the strength the Party acquires through its solidarity. One proof of organizational vigor is the decisive manner in which the Party disposes of "capitulationists" and "deviationists" in its midst. Action verbs leave no doubt about how the Party handles these troublemakers: it "exposes," "routs," "eradicates," "punishes" them "with an iron hand."[30] Adjectives like "dynamic," "invincible," and "unshakable," applied both to the Party and to its individual members, reinforce the impression of profound strength.

But unity and strength avail nothing if not tempered by knowledge and wisdom. Of these the Party has an abundance, enabling it to offer the masses a "correct revolutionary leadership."[31] The key word is "correct." The Party, we learn from its literature, takes a "correct stand" on all issues of the age, never failing to follow in its councils a correct "Leninist course" as it plots its way toward the classless society in accordance with the laws of social development.[32] Armed with scientific insight and a sagacity little short of superhuman, it "looks keenly into the future" in order to inspire and guide the masses and bring about "the complete and final victory of socialism."[33]

Here indeed is helmsmanship. But in truth, what political party could possibly possess all of these virtues—unity, strength, wisdom, and leadership ability—in such superlative measure? The Communists' answer is that their organization is no ordinary political party. It is, as they often affirm, a party of a new type (*novogo tipa*), one that has ruled the Soviet Union for many decades in a "historically correct fashion."[34] Opponents may question its claim of superiority, but none may doubt that with ingenuity and skill the Communists have sketched an impressive word portrait of their Party. We cannot gauge precisely the effects of such language on the popular mind, but almost certainly it has swayed millions, especially in earlier days when communism was still undeniably a dynamic revolutionary force. Presumably it helps convert to communism people who admire or grovel before great power or who desperately seek solidity and authority in their lives. As for the unconverted, conceivably it puts the fear of Marx into some of them.[35]

Classes and Masses

As if to underscore their own humanity, Communists like to harp upon the inhumanity of capitalists and the capitalist system, which, they say, citing Marx and Engels, has alienated the worker from the fruits of his labor and degraded him into "an appendage of a machine," a mere "fragment of a man." In a word, capitalism and capitalist society are dehumanizing. Not until the proletarians and other toilers have broken their bonds and cast the capitalists out of the high places can a humane society come into being. In the meantime the exploiting class will keep on using and abusing people as though, in Stalin's words, they were little more than "human raw material, fit only for exploitation."[36]

But while Communists curse the bourgeoisie for treating workers as commodities, they themselves frequently betray by their language an inability or an unwillingness to think of men and women as much more than brute matter in motion. As proof of this, consider Stalin, a politician who seems to have enjoyed manipulating people almost as one manipulates lifeless objects such as chess pieces or two-by-fours. In *Foundations of Leninism* he depicted the Soviet peasantry as "exceptionally favourable material" (*isklyuchitel'no blagopriyatnyy material*) for an economic alliance with the proletariat, and in *Problems of Leninism* he insisted on the necessity of "implanting [*nasazhdeniya*] the principles of collectivism among the peasantry."[37] Stalin noticeably did not say "teaching" the peasants the principles; that would imply the use of reason and persuasion. "Implant," on the other hand, suggests either passivity from the peasant or the application of force by the implanters—and, as is well known, much coercion did accompany the collectivization of agriculture under Stalin. For one does not reason with raw material; one shapes it as one pleases. If not pliant, it has to be beaten or burned into shape. The same manipulative approach lay at the bottom of Stalin's widely quoted remark that writers are engineers of human minds.

Unfortunately Stalin's dehumanizing manner of expression was not an aberration among Communist rulers. Lenin employed comparable language. In *"Left-Wing" Communism*, for instance, he admonished Bolsheviks to build socialism in Russia "with the aid of the human material [*chelovecheskogo materiala*] created by capitalism" and to "remould" and "assimilate" bourgeois intellectuals into the Soviet system.[38] Chernenko also talked of "moulding the new man," and other Party officials have waxed zealous about "welding" the proletariat "into a single mass political army" or fashioning "raw, rustic

material into enthusiastic shock workers."[39] The program adopted in 1961 by the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU proclaims the importance of "moulding" the young generation, "recasting" the minds of Soviet people in general, and "fusing" the workers, kolkhozniks, and intellectuals into a "single collective."[40]

The masses, then, or so it appears from Communist parlance, are in need of molding by an enlightened elite. Essentially they are so much clay. But what is curious is that Communists do not even speak of themselves, the custodians of Utopia-in-progress, in language any more elevated and human. Not that they regard themselves as raw material. Rather, they are the technical apparatus for refining and transforming the material into serviceable substance. Soviet Party members, for example, are commonly called *apparatchiki* or men of the machine. The machine is Soviet Party bureaucracy, but in fact the whole Communist government and state are considered a sort of engine or dynamo whose chief components are Party members and Party organizations. Thus Lenin and Stalin refer to Communist trade unions, cooperative societies, soviets, youth organizations, and the entire Bolshevik party and its membership as "transmission belts" or "levers" by which the leadership makes known to the masses its will.[41] Needless to note, all of these parts require for their perfect fit and flawless functioning a preliminary "marxist-leninist tempering" along the assembly line of Party indoctrination and training.[42]

Too easily might we account for the Communists' dehumanizing language by writing it off to the brutal dispositions of dictators. To be sure, from rulers who would dump into the "sewage system" of the Gulag Archipelago uncounted millions of their countrymen, blameless but for breathing, callous words must come naturally. But the character of Lenin or Stalin or Yuri Andropov is only part of the explanation for this depersonalizing form of speech. Another part is Marxist-Leninist ideology. Anyone steeped in its tenets is likely to have trouble seeing the trees for the forest; he will tend to see classes and masses but not individuals. To a doctrinaire Communist the individual in a class society—which is to say, the individual in all societies save the final and future one—has no significance except as a member of a class. Alone, he lies in the grip of impersonal forces that sweep him hither and yon. Joined to the mass, however, he gains power over events and people. Not as a man but as part of a mass he can move History. In this quantitative and materialistic way of thinking, human beings reduce readily to *Menschenmaterial.*

A person obsessed with abstractions like "class" and "bourgeoisie" cannot clearly discern social realities. Any concrete picture of them

has been effectively blocked from his brain. The consequences may be all too concrete, however. Viewing people solely as members of a class or as lumps of malleable matter, the truly dedicated Communist can hate them when hatred is called for and kill them when killing is called for. He can acquiesce if need be in their arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and ultimate annihilation by the state. He himself may arrest them or carry out the sentence of death; at any rate he will jump to defend the injustice. One does not murder Ivan Ivanovich, after all: one "liquidates" a capitalist or a kulak; one returns a few pounds of raw material to the earth. And if the Party stalwart himself should be the next victim? Does he protest when History deposits him and some of his comrades in a heap in an Arctic labor camp? Perhaps not: for having long since lost his sense of the particular and of his own and others' value as individuals, and denying the power of a solitary person to influence events and shape circumstances, he may resign himself without complaint to the collective will as expressed in the Leader's decree.[43]

One should not stress too much the Communist language of dehumanization. It is but one tendency among many in Communist discourse, and not by any means the most marked. Furthermore, in their coarseness phrases like the "material" and "transmission belts" of Marxist-Leninist jargon lag far behind the "vermin" and "fission-fungus" of Nazi German. But then National Socialists never seriously pretended to love mankind. In a perverse way Communists do, and their doctrines of liberation and fraternity for Toiling Humanity in the abstract may temper somewhat the tendency toward an altogether depersonalizing language—temper it, but fail to conceal an undercurrent of contempt for humanity in the flesh.

The Superiority of Communism

Part of communism's perennial appeal has been its promise to make life more livable for the masses. This promise rests upon the claim of Marx and others that communism is the most progressive and rational system of production and social organization. By contrast capitalism, though revolutionary in its origins and first effects, which included the demolition of medieval institutions and dramatic transformations of the mode of economic production, has acquired a reactionary and repressive character. Under its dominion miseries have multiplied and greed grown rampant; profits take precedence over people. The introduction of communism alone can remedy the situation. By blot-

ting out the bourgeois class, by breaking the industrial cycle of boom and bust, by emancipating the proletariat and abolishing the exploitation of one person by another, it opens to mankind an epoch of prosperity and peace. In productive efficiency, in the distribution of goods and services, in social relations, in the nurturing of humane values—by any measure we choose to apply—communism is superior to past systems.

Or so Communists have always insisted. Consequently any ruling party calling itself Communist, even if it only recently came to power, and even if beset from every side by implacably hostile bourgeois states plotting its downfall, faces immense pressure to prove itself and the society it governs superior in all respects to the capitalist competition. In point of fact, and for whatever reason, no Communist country, even when it commanded the natural and demographic resources necessary for doing so, has ever consistently matched the material and scientific achievements of the principal capitalist countries. But one would never surmise this from reading Communist literature, which portrays a reality altogether different from the kind that impinges on the senses. If one believes the typical apologists for Communist regimes, communism in practice has performed not merely better than capitalism, but better in a big way.

To support their claim of supereminence, the Communists have cultivated a superlative style of rhetoric remarkably similar to the Nazis' monumentalist language. When deeds fail them, they rely upon words to plug the factual gap formed by promises unfulfilled. Borrowing a term from the Soviets themselves, we may call this Communist propensity for exaggerating to the nth degree the accomplishments of communism *gigantomania*.

Superlatives of production and growth are perhaps the best example of rhetorical gigantomania. In the economic sphere above all others communism is supposed to shine, and sure enough the CPSU Central Committee's periodic statistical statements on the Soviet economy, with their frequently false claims that industrial and agricultural goals had been "fulfilled and overfulfilled," conveyed for many years precisely the impression of prosperity and a rock-hard ruble. (Under Gorbachev, interestingly, a note of realism and even of pessimism has replaced the superlative rhetoric in these economic reports.) But this puffery over five-year plans seems almost subdued alongside certain other claims of Soviet propaganda. Until the late 1980s, for instance, spokesmen for Moscow had a way of recounting ad nauseam their government and people's prodigies of "socialist construction." Soviet policies and power, we heard, had "liquidated

unemployment for all time," converted the underdeveloped agriculture of czarist Russia "into the largest, most mechanized, skilled and productive in the world," and in general enabled the nations of the USSR to make, in Konstantin Chernenko's words, "a spectacular advance from backwardness to the summits of progress within a historically brief space of time."[44] Communist literature tells many a repetitious tale of "colossal" plans, "matchless" exploits, and "grandiose" achievements.

The same kinds of phrases—"breathtaking progress," "unprecedented advances," "gigantic leaps"—were once used routinely in describing accomplishments in the cultural and military spheres. For example, Andrei Zhdanov—ironically one of the men most responsible for crushing the spirit of Russian writers in the Stalin era—once predicted that Soviet literature would soon become "the most advanced . . . in the world, a literature which will far surpass the finest literary examples of former times."[45] As for the Red Army, defender of the people's revolution, even more embellished language was sometimes required. In fact, for decades after the civil war and foreign interventions of 1918–20, when the Soviet military purportedly demonstrated "unparalleled self-sacrifice and unexampled mass heroism" and indeed discomfited and routed "enemies ten times its size, a thousand times better armed, the leading armies of the world,"[46] Communists saved some of their choicest superlatives for the fighting forces of the USSR. In his addresses and orders of the day during World War II, for instance, Stalin repeatedly saluted the armed services for their "colossal might" and their campaigns "without parallel in the history of wars." "Soviet power," he bragged in 1943, ". . . has transformed our country within a short historical period into an impregnable fortress. The Red Army has the most stable and reliable rear of all the armies in the world."[47]

About the Soviet political system perhaps the most extravagant claims of all were put forward. "A *million times* more democratic than any bourgeois democracy," Lenin said of it, and the chorus of praise continued long after the system's founder passed from the scene. "What the Soviet government has done for the masses in the course of a few years," D. Z. Manuilsky declared at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935, "cannot be compared with anything in history." Presumably its stupendous accomplishments help to explain why in the Soviet Union, to cite the journal *Kommunist* in 1954, "there has arisen a moral and political unity of the people unprecedented in the history of mankind."[48]

Lest we fail to give credit where credit in theory is due, we must

keep in mind that from the Communist perspective it was the Party in its brilliance that brought about this sublime state of affairs. Having seen how sovereign a place the Party occupies in Marxist-Leninist doctrine, we should not marvel that its members advertised themselves as "partisans of the most humane, the most life-asserting world outlook" and of "the most progressive and genuinely scientific ideology of the present age."[49] Nor should we wonder that the Party itself was considered "superior above all organizations," "the most consistent revolutionary Party of all parties that have ever existed."[50] Nor, finally, should we regard as anything out of the ordinary the applause lavished upon Party leaders. Of Lenin, for example, Party history records that he cut a "gigantic figure" and that his ideas remain for all progressive peoples "an inexhaustible source of inspiration."[51] Of Joseph Stalin, in actuality a destroyer of Russian letters, the world heard during his lifetime that he was "the greatest scholar of our epoch"—perhaps the least of his attainments, since he was also "the greatest army leader of all times and all nations" and, in the words of an old Bolshevik he later caused to be murdered, "the greatest man of all ages and nations."[52]

It is tempting to attribute rhetorical gigantomania to something in the Russian national character—to the country's historical sense of insecurity, perhaps, or to a collective inferiority complex for which Russians try to compensate with tall talk. We should resist this temptation for two reasons. First, Soviet superlativism in its bluster, its bombast, and its disregard for facts far exceeds anything in Dostoevsky, Pobedonostsev, or any of the more passionate proponents of Pan-Slavism. It is like nothing known in Russian public discourse before the advent of Bolshevism. Second, among Communist parties the Soviet superlative style is not unique. Fidel Castro's speeches, for example, are replete with phrases like "the thousand-times heroic people of Vietnam," and at a time well within memory Mao Tse-tung received from his worshipers the titles of "great teacher" and "source of boundless wisdom and courage," to mention only the most modest encomiums.[53]

To a greater or lesser extent all orthodox Communist governments indulge in this sort of rhetoric. Something besides a Russian character flaw must therefore account for it. Perhaps totalitarians in general, not just Communists, resort to it by instinct and by habit; murderously intolerant types who prefer to push everything to an extreme will pour forth automatically and compulsively with superlatives and runaway rhetoric. But Communists must also bear the burden of trying to fulfill Marx's predictions and promises and proving them-

selves and their new order equal to the expectations of the masses. In this they fall far short; and thus when crops fail they rhapsodize about record harvests, when apathy eats away at the body politic they babble about the inexhaustible energy and enthusiasm of the people, and when a Party congress closes without having solved a single pressing problem they hail it as a historic milestone. In short, superlative language belies a reality Communists can never acknowledge without seeming to make fools of Marx and Lenin and nullifying the Party's title to power.

But unfortunately it may do more than that. By making the Communist state appear all-powerful and irrepressible, it may petrify potential foes of the regime, hectoring them, the Party hopes, into supine submission. For what person in his senses would defy so formidable a state? Or dare try to disrupt "the most stable and reliable rear of all the armies in the world"? And what degenerate capitalist country, confronted in word and perhaps also in fact with communism's "colossal" strength, would not take fright and fritter away its few remaining military advantages in a vain endeavor to hold the colossus at bay through bargaining and "dialogue"? In fine, Communist discourse has as one of its subsidiary purposes the intimidation of peoples and governments. In this too, it closely resembles Nazi language.

The Necessity of Violence

It is a maxim of Marxist-Leninist ideology that violence accompanies every great convulsion of society, and most of all the series of crises and cataclysms by which capitalism succumbs to communism. Never through diplomacy or pacifism will an end to capitalist exploitation come about. Only revolution can liberate the working classes, and a revolution, as Mao reminded us, is not a dinner party. The oppressors will resist change; heads inevitably will collide; some of them will roll.

Class-conscious proletarians, therefore, should not flinch from using force against the exploiters. Lest they feel an occasional qualm born of bourgeois morality, however, their primitive proclivities toward violence must be constantly kindled and rekindled and their hatreds kept as far as possible at fever pitch. To this end Communist parties have evolved a vocabulary of sometimes surprising vehemence, a lexicon full of incitements to bruise, batter, and bury an enemy. Its staple entries include "smash," "crush," "cripple," "ex-

terminate," "destroy," and "wipe out," to name but a handful, and among its more vivid images smashed skulls, broken bones, hacked-off hands, and iron fists figure prominently, as do looting, burning, flaying, drowning, burial alive, and the like. Typically such language is directed at any of three general groups of enemies: the bourgeoisie, the imperialist nations, and traitors to the working class. At the same time, the language of violence can be used in characterizing the actions of these groups. The bourgeois as well as the Communist has a propensity to smash skulls. The difference is that he smashes proletarian skulls; the Communist smashes bourgeois ones. The latter action is honorable and moral because it furthers the Revolution; the former is ignominious and immoral because it assists Reaction.[54]

From Marx to Mao, Communist ideology has made the bourgeoisie the central object of proletarian abhorrence and hatred, portraying them as the principal promoters of misery and injustice. Understandably, therefore, Communists wish to destroy this class. Indeed, by definition the dictatorship of the proletariat exists precisely for that purpose. Accordingly, in Communist discourse both the masses and members of the Party are exhorted to "beat the class enemy to death," to "ruthlessly suppress" the exploiters "with the iron hand of the armed workers."[55] When the workers have done with beating and bashing, they must undertake, in Lenin's words, "to crush, smash to atoms, wipe off the face of the earth the bourgeois . . . state machine." And if in their folly the capitalists fight back, let them beware. Chairman Mao has warned them: "Whoever wants to oppose the Communist Party must be prepared to be ground to dust."[56]

Extermination awaits also the imperialist powers that provoke Communist states. If the German fascists persisted in their saber rattling, an official of the Comintern prophesied in the mid-1930s, "their fiendish hands will be hacked off by the axe of a powerful anti-war front." "If the American imperialists dare to force war upon us," the Chinese Communist organ *People's Daily* editorialized in 1966, "we will resolutely, thoroughly, wholly, and completely [*jianjue chedi ganjing quanbu de*] annihilate them in the ocean of people's war." Naturally the language of violence reaches somewhat shriller levels during actual armed conflict with the imperialists. Thus Stalin's exhortations to the Red Army in the Great Patriotic War to "exterminate every single German" and "break the backbone of the fascist beast."[57]

The bourgeoisie and the imperialists, then, will perish in a flash of fury. History has so decreed, and Communists can do nothing but coldly execute its inexorable judgment. But we must add to these a third class of enemies: alleged traitors to the workers' movement.

These quislings fall into either of two categories: non-Communist socialists or dissidents within the Communist party. The latter in particular are an abomination because disrupters and renegades endanger Party discipline. For this reason they deserve the soundest of thrashings, and in Party rhetoric as well as in Party practice they generally get it. Shortly after the turn of the century, for example, Lenin was calling upon Bolsheviks to "rout" the Menshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic party and to wage against it a "merciless war of extermination."[58] Subsequent Soviet champions displayed equal ferocity. Years after Lenin's death Georgy Dimitrov, general secretary of the Comintern, was threatening that fractionalists and wreckers within the Party would "be flayed without mercy."[59] He seems to have meant this in an almost literal sense. Not long afterward, at a conference of Moscow Party members in June 1937, Nikita Khrushchev, a staunch Stalinist at the time, was making a few threats of his own. "Our Party," he bellowed, "will mercilessly crush the band of traitors and betrayers, and wipe out all the Trotskyist-Right dregs. . . . We shall totally annihilate the enemies—to the last man—and scatter their ashes to the winds."[60] As for non-Communist socialists, they suffer similar treatment. In Party tirades Socialist Revolutionaries, too, get "crushed mercilessly," and the Social Democrats of the Second International find themselves "swept into the renegades' cesspool."[61]

Earlier I suggested that Communist language can surprise by its savagery. It surprises because violent language seems incongruous with Communist ideals of peace and friendship. Except in revulsion, do patrons of peace habitually dwell upon broken bones and mutilated bodies? There are two explanations for the incongruity. The first is that for all their professions of peace and brotherhood, the more fanatical Communists are pathologically attracted to violence. Ideologues harboring an irrational hatred of traditional institutions and values, they wish by whatever means necessary, including the cruelest, to extinguish the old order and everything connected with it. In violent language they give vent to both the hatred and the wish, so that even when they hold forth on subjects having apparently little to do with violence, the signs of bloodlust slip out in phrases like "batter the warmongers to death with peace" and "Trotskyism had to be ideologically demolished."[62] The second explanation is that the use of violent language is not temperamental but tactical, an expedient adopted in the course of class struggle. There must and will be peace, to be sure; but before it can break upon the planet, the exploiters have to be disposed of. This requires violence, not for its own sake

but for advancing the day of universal friendship. If violent language can prod the proletariat into violent action on its own behalf, so much the better.

Probably both of these explanations are correct. Many Communists do hate the old order, they do wish a plague of violence upon it, they do sometimes seem to speak the lingo of ruffians and rowdies unrehearsed. On the other hand, they have shown themselves well capable of controlling their tongues when to do so would serve the interest of "class struggle." In Soviet speeches and articles aimed at Western audiences in the 1970s, for example, the language of violence appeared to pass behind a cloud of cant about disarmament and peace. Inasmuch as Soviet internal rhetoric retained much of its earlier vehemence, the Soviets would seem to have moderated their external rhetoric in part because, as Solzhenitsyn charged at the time, they were seeking for tactical reasons international respectability and Western technology and grain. Even in the external rhetoric, however, traces of violent language lingered, and if world tensions had mounted or new rivalries had arisen among the Communist parties, the mailed fists and fractured ribs of Communist discourse might have returned with a vengeance.

The Mobilization of Language

Even though Communists advocate violence, if it is to serve the Party's noble purpose it must be methodical violence, violence with a definite plan and goal behind it—the kind committed by armies rather than by vandals or bands of aimless anarchists. Communists from Marx and Engels to Gromyko and Brezhnev have in fact considered themselves revolutionary soldiers engaged in violence for a revolutionary purpose, wherefore they often speak of the Party and its activities in terms borrowed from the martial profession.

To the militant Communist all the world is a battleground, and the men and women in it are warriors fighting for either the capitalist or the socialist "camp." In one camp gather the "forces" of reaction, militarism, and oppression; in the other the forces of progress, peace, and freedom. The two sides tangle sometimes along a literal military front—such was the case in Korea and Vietnam—but more often along many figurative "fronts," including the political, the ideological, the economic, the educational and cultural, even the athletic and peace fronts. For in Communist as in Nazi rhetoric, all areas of existence merge to make up a Manichaean theater of perpetual conflict

or "struggle." In this theater the socialist camp carries on a struggle for communism, liberation, and peace, as well as a struggle against imperialism, the arms race, and even, as a writer in the Chinese *People's Daily* once put it, "the bourgeois thinking within oneself."[63]

Against its enemy the socialist camp enjoys decided advantages. Not only does the "correlation of world forces" increasingly favor it; it also has at its head the "invincible" Communist party. In the literature of Marxism-Leninism the Party is portrayed as the "experienced General Staff" of the world revolutionary movement.[64] A master strategist, it "arms the masses ideologically" and fashions the countries under its control into "fortresses" of world revolution, peace, and socialism.[65] Ever poised in "combat readiness" against the threat of "encirclement" by imperialist powers, the Party maintains at all times the "iron unity" of its "ranks."[66] But in no way does it carry on a passive struggle. Whenever possible and prudent to do so, it takes to the attack. In Communist rhetoric the Party "concentrates" its troops, launches "socialist offensives," "conquers new positions," "pierces the front of capitalism."[67] Together with its mass recruits it forms an irresistible armed force.

Although Communists are homicidally serious about class struggle, much of their militant language, even that of prominent figures like Lenin, Stalin, and Brezhnev, from whom many of the expressions quoted in the preceding paragraph are taken, has nothing immediately to do with real combat. Rather, it consists of military images applied to purely political or economic matters. Consider the following statement from the *Short Course*: "War Communism had been an attempt to take the fortress of the capitalist elements in town and countryside by assault, by a frontal attack. In this offensive the Party had gone too far ahead, and ran the risk of being cut off from its base. Now Lenin proposed to retire a little, to retreat for a while nearer to the base, to change from an assault of the fortress to the slower method of siege, so as to gather strength and resume the offensive."[68] What were the authors saying here? Only that out of expediency the Bolshevik party slowed the tempo of revolutionary economic and social change in Russia by adopting Lenin's New Economic Policy. But their narrative presents the image of an army trying to outmaneuver and conquer an enemy. This tendency to debase the rhetoric of battle, understandable perhaps in the 1920s when genuinely revolutionary passions still glowed in Bolshevik breasts, has continued to plague Communist language, and not solely the Soviet dialect, right down to the present. Times have grown tamer and less turbulent and the Communist parties far more "institutionalized" than formerly,

yet Communists have kept on talking as though Kolchak were still in Siberia and Chiang Kai-shek in Chungking. As a result militant language has lost much of the power and conviction it appears to have carried in the days when Lenin and Stalin were marshaling their troops for impending class battles. When, for example, the Soviet Party exhorted citizens to wage a resolute struggle against embezzlement and drunkenness, or when the East German government under Walter Ulbricht launched a campaign to increase the production of milk and called it a *Milchkampf*, words had seriously depreciated.[69] What was once dynamic and spirited has become static and banal.

Nowhere has the process of depreciation advanced further and faster than in mainland China, where, even before the Cultural Revolution and Chairman Mao's attempts to rekindle the radical torch, to work hard for socialist production was to fight a battle (*zhandou*) and to mount an all-out production drive was to attack by storm (*tuji*). A series of articles in *People's Daily* in April 1958 reported an "illustrious great battle" for which practically the whole population of Beijing, "three million brave warriors with a single heart," had been bestirred and "mobilized." And to what great engagement were they summoned? The Battle of the Sparrows. At a time of serious grain shortages, these avian adversaries had been pilfering supplies. This called for a major campaign. The people of Beijing were accordingly conscripted into "shock brigades," "slingshot units," and "scattering and chasing units." With much fanfare this formidable fighting machine sallied forth to meet the enemy with the altogether predictable outcome that he suffered complete "annihilation."[70]

Unquestionably the Marxist-Leninist ideology encourages the militant mentality that inspires language of this kind. Dialectical materialism teaches that in nature and society alike there occurs a constant "unity and struggle of opposites" and, more important, that in the social order this tension between antitheses or classes, with its periodic explosions into violence, is actually the agent of all progress. If there must be struggle and combat, then one task of loyal Communists is to acquit themselves as good soldiers on the side of humanity. In addition to dialectical materialism, the bipolar patterns of thought and the paranoia prevailing among revolutionary groups and in one-party states condition Communists to see class enemies crouched in every corner, spoiling for a fight and entirely deserving of "annihilation." Indeed, for totalitarians of all stripes, every family, every factory, every church, every school, every professional organization, every science is a citadel to be seized or an army to be decimated, a source of potential resistance to total control which the totalitarian

party must first pulverize and then, after the necessary purges and remolding, somehow "synchronize" or bring into line with its goals and policies. One can hardly conceive of society as the setting for endless struggles and quasi-combat operations without betraying so by one's speech. Inevitably, then, as a consequence of training, experience, and outlook, Communists not only are accustomed to think militant thoughts but prefer a militant manner of expression to the more pacific style of bourgeois diplomacy and statecraft.

But the martial style of speech is more than mere effect. In spite of their seemingly mindless bent for abusing and working it to exhaustion, Communists have definite designs in using militant language. In his interviews with American, English, French, and Italian ex-Communists in the early 1950s, Gabriel Almond found that without prompting 69 percent of them cited the Party's militance and aggressiveness as a reason for having joined the Communist movement.[71] Apparently, as Zevedei Barbu suggested in a little-noticed analysis of political language in 1953, the Party and the rigid regimentation of life in societies it dominates appeal to people who unconsciously wish both to curb their anarchic and aggressive impulses and to find a legitimate outlet for them.[72] Militant language contributes to the militant atmosphere that draws personalities of this type into the Party and enables it to "mobilize" the populace behind its policies and programs.

To a bourgeois mind the martial tones and accents may seem to make nonsense of the claim by Communists that they seek peace and universal concord. If the Party deplores war, why does it often act and speak as though it expected Armageddon on the morrow? To this charge Chairman Mao once replied, in as good an apology as any yet offered by the Party for its militance: "In order to get rid of the gun it is necessary to take up the gun."[73] Necessary, too, one may add, to have a command of militant language.

The Doctrine of Inevitability and Its Language

The gospel according to Marx, with amendments and glosses by Lenin and Stalin, is a gospel of hope and courage, offering to its adherents a measure of certainty and assurance amid the political and personal defeats of day-to-day life. For it teaches the true believer that Utopia will inevitably dawn: the mechanics of History guarantee it. Do what they will to prevent this, the capitalists cannot halt, though at times they may manage to hinder (hence the need for un-

remitting vigilance against them), the long march of the oppressed peoples toward the classless society. Ridden with "contradictions," reeling from crisis to crisis, each more perilous and painful than the preceding, the bourgeois system together with its governing classes is doomed to extinction. Of necessity communism and the proletarian paradise will replace it: to the toilers alone belong the future and the fruits of the earth.

The doctrine of inevitability—the inevitability of defeat for capitalism, of triumph for communism—is nurtured by Marxist-Leninist language.

To make the decline of capitalism appear inevitable, for instance, Communists portray the capitalist system as irredeemably reactionary and regressive in character and its defenders as a forlorn and desperate group of people whom History has left behind. They keep up these portrayals constantly and in the teeth of the most contradictory facts. In boom times and in bad, in peace or in war, in civil calm or in civil strife, Communists have consistently pictured the world of capitalism as utterly "obsolete," "historically outdated," paralyzed by "malaise," shaken by an "all-permeating crisis," and headed toward "inevitable collapse."[74] "An inexorable process of decay has seized capitalism from top to bottom," reads a plank of the program adopted by the Twenty-second Congress of the CPSU in 1961. "Imperialism has for ever lost its power over the bulk of mankind."[75] Adjectives like "moribund," "parasitic," and "bankrupt" strengthen the impression of impotence and augur the breakdown of bourgeois civilization.[76]

If the system is impotent, equally so are its advocates. These "men of yesterday," whose views and policies, as a commentator for *Izvestia* wrote of the Reagan administration, are completely "archaic and at variance with the direction of the historical process,"[77] have lost confidence in themselves, their system, and their ideology. According to the late Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko, an accomplished hand at representing his nation's rivals as pessimists of the first magnitude, the apologists for capitalism anticipate a "bleak future," "are haunted by nightmares," and, like fourth-century Stoics, have given themselves over to "fatalism."[78] Similarly, other Communist critics exult that the reactionary bourgeoisie are "frustrated," "floundering," twisting about "in their death throes."[79]

But these capitalists, it turns out, are not too feeble to work a good deal of mischief before the fall. They are, after all, desperate men committed to desperate measures. "The reactionary forces of the old world," Leonid Brezhnev warned, "will not reconcile themselves to the growth and consolidation of the new."[80] In spite of what Lenin

called their "frenzied ravings," therefore, the bourgeoisie can collect their senses sufficiently to struggle with all the cunning and might they can muster "to check the revolutionary process," attempting through conspiracy, sabotage, and military aggression to "hold back the wheel of history."[81] But their desperation is only one more symptom of certain doom. At best these capitalist desperadoes can only delay or momentarily obstruct the forward movement of History. Unhappily for them, the "general crisis" and decline of capitalism are an "irreversible process."[82]

Contrast with the despair of the bourgeoisie the buoyancy of the class-conscious proletariat as depicted in Communist literature. On one side pessimism, paralysis, and gloom hold sway; on the other unlimited optimism and vitality. One side retreats into the past; the other builds the future. One looks backward while bucking the tide of progress; the other fixes its gaze forward and coasts along upon the crest of History. One wallows in misanthropy and obscurantism; the other embraces humanity and enlightenment. One faces certain defeat; the other awaits inevitable victory. And lest the faith of any proletarian in final victory flag for even a moment, Communist wordsmen have a way to bolster confidence. They do it with a display of dynamism in language.

For one thing, they lay much stress upon the notion of novelty. Through such phrases as "new and advanced socialist culture" and "new type of democracy," phrases that refer invariably to Communist societies and systems, they have sought, and well nigh succeeded in the endeavor, to make "new" a synonym for Communist.[83] As Madison Avenue well knows, to many moderns anything "new" is naturally superior to its "old" counterpart; and in any contest between new and old, it is assumed that the new, precisely because it is new, will sooner or later gain the ascendancy. If, then, as Communist propaganda would have it, communism represents the new—the latest wave of History, bearing with it a bright future—and capitalism the old—a receding wave of History, soon to become merely a disagreeable memory—communism perforce will carry the day and overwhelm the old world.

Another formula for dynamism is to repeat to the point of monotony such expressions as "national liberation movement" and "revolutionary process" and in general to suggest that the Communist party and state and their supporters are collectively a sort of perpetual motion machine. Moreover, the machine moves always forward, never backward. Hence Fidel Castro sees in contemporary events "the victorious advance of humanity," the ideologist Mikhail Suslov surveyed

with satisfaction the Soviet people's progress in "marching boldly ahead" toward the classless millenium, and Marxist-Leninist texts treat the course of historical development, which willy-nilly must culminate in the victory of communism, as "an onward and upward movement."[84]

No force or object can deflect from its forward track this perpetual motion machine. That, at least, is the impression produced by words and phrases like "all-conquering," "irresistible," "inexorable march of history," and "sweeping the world with the momentum of an avalanche and the force of a thunderbolt."[85] With such power propelling the Party and the proletariat, no informed and rational person could possibly disagree with the present dictator of Cuba, who seldom fails to close a speech with a shout of *Venceremos!*—"We will win!"

Behind the language of inevitability lies a relentless logic which one may frame in the following terms: History is bigger than us all, and no one can change what is happening. What is happening is the historically necessary victory of communism over capitalism. Ergo, don't be a fool and try to dam up the process. Fight with us or else sink back into oblivion with the defeated classes. Declare your faith in the classless future and the cause of the workers or be scattered like chaff by the winds of historical change. Undoubtedly the bandwagon psychology and the can't-lick-'em-then-join-'em attitude encouraged by this logic have made more than a dent or two in the minds of people who might otherwise recoil from casting their lot with the Communists. Couple the logic with the undeniable political successes of communism in this century and with the social pressures that any orthodox Communist government can exert upon citizens who hesitate to endorse the One True Way, and the combination can prove difficult for even the most skeptical souls to resist.

As for Western skeptics, they too may find the dialectic of inevitability intimidating. At the height of the Cold War, the hardest anti-Communist, faced with the apparently irrepressible conviction and optimism of Communists, dismayed by what he saw as the growing military strength of the Soviet Union and the expansion of its power and influence in Africa and Southeast Asia, and viewing with melancholy the prospect of a "long twilight struggle" with so relentless a foe, might indeed have experienced a failure of nerve or a crisis of confidence in free government (the fate of Henry Kissinger in the 1970s, according to some of his critics). If enough people waver—or so the more determined Communists hope—the will of the West to resist the "irresistible" must weaken and the capitalist forces give ground again and again on every front, thereby tending to confirm

that all will come to pass as Mao predicted: the East Wind will prevail over the West Wind.

While weakening the morale of the enemy, the language of inevitability is supposed to build it up among friends to the cause. It helps hold the troops in line, dispelling the doubts and reinforcing the faith of comrades tempted to backslide during times of tribulation and travail for the Party. The committed Communist—the person for whom Party teachings about Reaction, Progress, and History have attained the status of settled convictions—can count on ultimate victory for the movement even though he himself may have to sip from a bitter cup. Even some of the movement's leaders—perhaps the leaders above all—have drawn comfort from the doctrines and language of inevitability. After the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, for example, through which imperial Germany imposed upon the infant Soviet state a highly unfavorable peace settlement, Lenin could yet find cause for optimism. "Of all things the most impermissible is despair," he wrote in *Pravda* on 24 February 1918. "History will come into its own; to our aid will come . . . the steadily maturing socialist revolution in other countries."[86] There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of this assertion. For even amid what may seem to everyone else to be staggering setbacks, steadfast Communists can scent victory and vindication from afar.

Political Religion

Throughout this chapter, when using in connection with communism such terms as "gospel," "believer," and "faith," I have done so advisedly: for Communism, together with national socialism, has been justly described as a "secularized politico-social religion."[87] In notable ways it resembles traditional faiths, in form if not in content. Some analysts, for instance, have drawn parallels between communism and Christianity. Although one ought not to press the comparison too far, certain intriguing similarities between the secular and the otherworldly faith do suggest themselves. Thus one might argue that Marx in his philosophical system dethroned God but propped up in his place a less personal yet equally omnipotent deity, History. From this analogy others follow. Marx and Engels become prophets of the new god and its creed, communism; Lenin, the first pope; subsequent Soviet dictators, the apostolic succession; the proletariat, saints; the bourgeoisie, sinners; the classless society, Heaven; the capitalist world, Hell. The new religion, moreover, has often bran-

dished the sword against schismatics and heretics (Tito and Trotsky), staged its own Inquisition (the Moscow trials), and even introduced a new-Adam theme of individual rebirth or regeneration (the New Soviet Man or the Maoist Man). Communism, then, if we accept such analogies, may be Godless, but most emphatically it is not godless. Communists themselves tend to think of it as a sort of surrogate faith for the masses in a world where supposedly the ancient "exploitative" religions are losing their lock on people's allegiance. That this is so seems clear from the currency of theological language in Party literature.

The word "faith," which lay at the center of so many Reformation controversies, illustrates the point. In a well-known passage of the New Testament, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews defined faith as "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."[88] Now the classless society is undeniably a thing "not seen," only sought. To await it with confidence when all of history casts doubt upon the possibility it could ever come into being requires a store of faith perhaps greater than the biblical grain of mustard seed; and this faith the Communist party promises to its followers. The *Short Course* and other Party publications, for example, have taught that Lenin's theory of socialist revolution encourages and comforts the masses and "strengthens their faith in the victory of the proletarian revolution." Many pages of Party literature celebrate "the faith [*Glauben*] of the working class in its future" and in the triumph of socialism. As we might expect, it is the calling of the Communist party to "preach" the message of faith and revolutionary redemption, as Lenin put it in 1918, "to the uneducated masses."[89]

Words like "faith" and "preach" occur repeatedly in Communist discourse, often coupled with eschatological expressions. Communism, we are told, is the world's "salvation."[90] The proletariat—that is, the Communist party—is "the true savior of mankind." Its struggles against imperialist aggression are "holy wars," its casualties in these struggles are "martyrs" to the cause of peace and freedom.[91] (Even the police and soldiers slain in the confrontation with students and workers in Beijing are now memorialized as "martyrs.")[92] The goal for which they have so gallantly sacrificed their lives is nothing less than "the resurrection day of mankind."[93]

Although generally enforcing a policy of atheism, Communist governments have never discarded the concept of sacredness. To the contrary, as the following snippets from speeches and other Party documents suggest, people living under communism have merely been bidden to transfer their reverence from Christian icons and

images of Buddha to other objects: "the Party is our most sacred [*heiligste*] concern," "our Party's holy Leninist principles," "the construction of socialism—a sacred goal," "defense of the socialist Fatherland . . . the sacred duty [*svyashchennyy dolg*] of every citizen."[94] By no means does this series complete the inventory of things "sacred" to socialism. The East Germans once formulated a "Ten Commandments of Socialist Morality" that lengthened the list of sacred duties appreciably. Among the new commandments:

> Thou shalt [*Du sollst*] accomplish good deeds for socialism.
> Thou shalt in the construction of socialism act in the spirit of mutual assistance and comradely [*kameradschaftlichen*] cooperation.
> Thou shalt strive toward improvement of thy works, be thrifty and strengthen the discipline of socialist labor.
> Thou shalt live cleanly and decently and respect thy family.[95]

Let it never be said that for Communists nothing is "sacred." But can anything be sacred unless at the same time something else is profane or outright unholy? Most religions and pseudoreligions assign a place in their belief systems to infernal spirits who personify unholiness and false belief, and communism is no exception to this practice. If in Communist mythology History, Party, and ideology supply the place of God, Church, and Christian dogma, then surely the capitalist and the maverick socialist supply the place of Lucifer and Pelagius. In fact, a whole rhetoric of malediction has been developed, much of it aimed at capitalism's "Satanic beasts of prey," naturally, but also a large amount at what Lenin, alluding to the New Testament parable, labeled the "tares" within the socialist movement.[96] Thus he denounced the European socialist parties for their opportunism and "apostasy" before the Great War, and about Karl Kautsky in particular he fumed: "Every phrase he utters is a bottomless pit of apostasy."[97] Stalin carried on the custom of execration by accusing Zinoviev and other old Bolsheviks of "sinning against internationalism and the world revolution" and by condemning the Second International for its "mortal sin" of pursuing peaceful and parliamentary forms of struggle.[98] To treasonous socialists who split the ranks of the workers, Nikita Khrushchev declared in 1961, "the imperialists are always prepared to pay thirty pieces of silver."[99]

How does it happen that out of the mouths of militant atheists flows the language of prophets, priests, and Protestant revivalists? At least during the early phases of the Communist movement and revolution, before careerism and cynicism set in to corrode the fiber of the

faithful, the religious imagery they employed may have pointed to a subconscious process at work. That is, having renounced the faith of his ancestors, be it the Catholic, Lutheran, Russian Orthodox, Jewish, or whatever persuasion, the rank-and-file Communist recruit, smitten with guilt and thirsting to drink from another fount of authority, cast about for new objects of adoration. These idols came to him prefabricated in the form of the Communist party, state, and ideology, to all of which he consecrated himself with the zeal and fervor of St. Francis wedding himself to the Lady Poverty. Over and over, consciously or unconsciously, he spoke of them in symbols siphoned off from the older and forsaken faith.

In the case of Party leaders and professional propagandists, on the other hand, something else is involved in addition to displaced religious feeling—namely, a shrewd awareness of the potency of religion in human life. For public mass may be banned, Bibles burned, church buildings and synagogues leveled, priests and pastors put to death—in short, all the outward forms and trappings of worship may by decree be done away with—yet religious emotions and sentiments persist. Then why not turn them to the Party's advantage? Do the masses seek an infallible source of truth? Let them look with assurance to the Party and its leaders, whose minds, permeated with the pure doctrines of Marx and Lenin, have scaled the summit of the world's wisdom. Do they clamor for miracles? Portray the deeds of Socialist Man as modernity's equivalent of turning water into wine or stones into bread. Do they require a demonology and an explanation for evil on earth? Teach them about the capitalist and the Trotskyite and their abominable practices and pretensions. Do they long for the millenium? Unfold before them the vision of an earth made new by communism.

Communists, in sum, seek to change the natural streams of religious susceptibilities and passions into artificial tributaries supporting the Party's cult of total power, and for this purpose they plunder again and again the "Christian treasure of ideas" that Pius XI tried in futility to protect from Nazi piracy. In thus appropriating for their dialectical dogmatics the terminology of traditional religion, they show much of the cynicism of their Nazi counterparts. Yet in fairness to them they are also attempting to fill a "spiritual vacuum" they themselves have helped create. When Communists use religious language, they are, as it were, sending out a ray of reassurance to modern humanity. "Darwin and Marx," they admit, "have laid waste the religious edifices of old. Good riddance, too, for religious superstitions have stifled Progress and poisoned many a promising mind. True, life without

faith can be a nasty affair. But you needn't lose hope. We offer you another and sounder faith, a faith founded upon Science. Embrace it and be whole."

Whether communism does indeed fill the spiritual vacuum, or whether in fact it has become in latter days little more than a badly cracking social cement, is a question good Communists presumably never pause to ponder.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RHETORICAL TREACHERY

In seeking and wielding power, Communist parties of the orthodox sort have seldom recoiled from using deceit and foul play. Something of this underhandedness shows through in various verbal devices employed by Communists. Rhetorical treachery and trickery aid the Party in scoring polemical and propaganda points, in beguiling the public, and in ridiculing and silencing critics. Fair play and the appeal to reason, it seems, cannot by themselves do the job of disarming opponents and winning over the masses; auxiliary means of persuasion are needed.

Following are some of the kinds of verbal deception most commonly used by Communists, together with such elaboration and examples as seem necessary to explain them. Few if any of these techniques, it may be noted, are used exclusively by Communists. The president who speaks euphemistically of "revenue enhancement" when he means tax increase and the radical parliamentary

critic of American foreign policy who refers to the free world with ironic quotation marks are both playing rhetorical tricks. But Western politicians tend to use such tricks only occasionally and almost incidentally, and rather clumsily and unconvincingly at that. On the other hand, Communist parties and governments tend to use them far more frequently and systematically, and with immeasurably more sophistication, than do their democratic opposites. Devices of verbal deception are part of the normal course of things in Marxist-Leninist speech and writing. For this reason Communist rhetorical tricks belong in a class by themselves; and because of their importance and prominence in Party discourse, no study of Marxist-Leninist language can wisely omit mentioning them.

Dogmatic Deduction

Perverse reasoning and assertion dressed up as irrefutable fact and self-evident truth form a conspicuous part of Communist language, which abounds with question begging, non sequiturs, arguments by definition, and a variety of other logical fallacies apparently intended to entrap the unwary. One of the more remarkable of these sophistical snares is what one might call dogmatic deduction. This is the process of reasoning from ideological premises accepted as statements of absolute truth and hence not assailable or subject to empirical verification. The conclusion may be logically valid; but because deduced from dubious or incorrect propositions, it is factually false or at best questionable.

Among Soviet Communists in particular this form of argumentation has been a favorite. From among many examples that might be cited, here is a specimen from a speech by Brezhnev: "Our opponents would like to find forces of some sort opposed to socialism inside our countries. Since there are no such forces, because in socialist society there are no oppressed or exploited classes or oppressed or exploited nationalities, some sort of substitute has been invented and an ostensible 'internal opposition' in socialist countries is being fabricated by means of false publicity. That is the reason for the organized clamor about the so-called dissidents and why a world-wide hullabaloo is being raised about 'violations of human rights' in socialist countries."[1]

Taking into account Brezhnev's implied major premise—that dissidence derives from exploitation—we can convert this passage into a type of syllogism:

Major ideological premise:	Political opposition cannot arise in the absence of exploited classes and nationalities.
Minor ideological premise:	Socialist (that is, Communist) societies have no exploited classes and nationalities.
Conclusion:	Socialist (Communist) societies have no political opposition.

From this challengeable conclusion Brezhnev leapt on to another: that all the Western talk about dissidence and deprivation of human rights in Communist countries is mere hullabaloo. Thus by a chain of dogmatic deduction he confounded the Western critics of his government's policies and repressions and reassured Soviet citizens unduly vexed by Voice of America propaganda. Through similar logic Communist dictators have demonstrated beyond the shadow of a dialectical doubt the absurdity of supposing that Communist countries could ever have or need more than one political party and the impossibility of workers in a Communist state ever wishing to strike.

Questionably Unquestionable Statements

Questionably unquestionable statements are another form of dogmatic discourse. However, the person who utters a questionably unquestionable statement makes no pretense of reasoning his way to a conclusion. He simply makes a doubtful or even demonstrably false assertion and passes it off as an obvious fact that only a liar or a lunatic would dispute.

Here are some samples:

> Everybody knows that this [theory of proletarian dictatorship] is the very *essence* of Marx's doctrine.
>
> —Lenin, 1918

> Everybody knows that the United States attacked Korea and is trying to enslave it, while the Soviet Union has not conducted any hostilities anywhere since the end of the Second World War.
>
> —Malenkov, 1952

> It is a matter of common knowledge today that it was precisely the aggression from the outside against revolutionary Afghani-

> stan, which was committed by counter-revolutionary bands organized, armed and encouraged by American special services jointly with the Chinese military that necessitated Soviet assistance in defending the gains of the Afghan people.
>
> —Chernenko, 1980[2]

So far as one can judge from available evidence, none of the above statements corresponds to the facts. At least one of them would appear to be an impudent lie, and the others, to put it politely, are open to contention. Yet all are treated as true beyond doubt and refutation. Almost certainly the officials who made these statements knew them to be false. But clearly Malenkov and the Soviet leadership, for example, had something to gain by blaming the United States for the Korean War, just as Lenin, who seems never to have used the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" before 1917, had something to gain by exaggerating the importance of the concept for Marxist doctrine once the Bolshevik party had set up a Soviet dictatorship.[3] Hence the use in each instance of a questionably unquestionable statement to bolster a falsehood. Whether people in Western countries nowadays fall prey to such propaganda tactics by the few remaining Communist governments that employ them seems unlikely, whatever may have been the case in an earlier era. But within the areas where shortwave signals are still jammed and the flow of facts through the mass media still carefully controlled or impeded, there may actually dwell, for all anyone knows, significant numbers of men and women too benighted and gullible to think of questioning the questionably unquestionable statement. For these people it seems designed not so much to convince as to encourage continued uncritical acceptance of the Party line.

Questionably unquestionable statements are easy to spot in Communist writing. As the quoted sentences suggest, the tip-off is the presence of such phrases as "everybody knows," "it is obvious that," and "history has shown." In general, when Communists say that something is well known or obvious or a matter of common knowledge, one can take it almost for granted that it is none of those things. The truth may even be, and often is, altogether the opposite.

Bandwagon Language

Fifty years ago the fledgling Institute for Propaganda Analysis in New York defined "bandwagon" as "a device to make us follow the crowd,

to accept the propagandist's program en masse. Here his theme is: 'Everybody's doing it.'"[4] Adapting this definition to Communist discourse, we may say that the bandwagon technique is a way of getting people to believe that the crowd is following the Communist party and, moreover, that only a perverse minority would have the temerity and turpitude not to follow it. As with questionably unquestionable statements, bandwagon language often contains certain stock expressions, such as "all honest people" and "all progressive forces," that reveal it for what it is:

> All the outstanding minds of our generation are turning against the capitalist system.
>
> —Pieck, 1935

> All honest minds know very well that the U.S.S.R. is a great peaceable nation, the only really peaceable nation in the whole world.
>
> —Cachin, 1935

> Important positive changes have been achieved in Europe thanks to the persistent and constructive policy of the Soviet Union and its socialist allies, and with the support of all peace-loving and realistically minded forces.
>
> —Brezhnev, 1973[5]

The clear implication of such statements is that if one supports capitalism and opposes détente or if one accuses the Soviet Union of committing aggression, one is a dishonest, unrealistic warmonger of inferior intellect.

It must be heartening for rank-and-file members of the Party to know that all progressive and peace-loving peoples stand shoulder to shoulder with them in the struggle against world imperialism and reaction. But at least as important as boosting morale, the bandwagon device is also meant to intimidate the meek and the timeserving, to pressure them into embracing the Party line. Their urge to conform, their ignorance, and the emphatic tone and certitude of the speaker lead them to receive his words as matters of undeniable fact. Capitalist advertising uses bandwagoning to sell cars and soap; Party propagandists use it to sell a policy, a program, or the Party itself.

Isms in Communist Propaganda

A dissident Party member raises questions about policy or practice. Will his criticism of the leadership crack the iron unity of the workers' movement? How to repair the damage and discredit the critic before he draws to himself a host of disciples and widens the rift into rupture? One might dispatch him posthaste with a bullet to the base of the brain, but why make him a martyr? Better by far to transform him into a fiend. The formula is simple: suffix "-ism" to his surname. Suddenly a new heretic appears on the historical stage, luring the faithful into perdition with a whole new ideological system—Trotskyism, Bukharinism, Zinovievism—offered as a challenge to orthodox doctrine.[6] Alerted to the danger, the Party rallies around the great banner of Marx and Lenin. The challenge is met and mastered, Party unity preserved, the heretic expelled and cast into outer ideological darkness. No matter if the miserable dissident sincerely wished only to reform the Party instead of branching off into a separate movement. What counts is that the leadership has made him a sacrifice to proletarian solidarity.

As Communist parties have proved again and again, one of the advantages of tacking on a negatively charged -ism to the tail of a term or a proper name is that this practice can be used to solidify the Party and protect the *Vozhd* from internal criticism. One by one over the years the supposed heretics have appeared, and one by one the Party has laid them low without bothering to appraise their positions fairly. Making them isms spare it the need of doing so. (See appendix E.)

By the same means as it stigmatizes persons the Party stigmatizes concepts: adding -ism makes them seem to the misinformed and the misled something consummately evil and corrosive. That moderate reform, for instance, is preferable to violent revolution, that trade unions are the proper agency for action by the workers, or that science is impartial and detached from class interests—the Party disposes of these notions by nimbly fastening an -ism in the appropriate place to produce "reformism," "unionism," and "objectivism," substantives that sound especially sinister when paired with a pejorative adjective like "bourgeois."

Through the magic of adding -ism mere abstractions rise to life and acquire monstrous dimensions and power. When one hears from Communists that "capitalism" savages forests and forges fetters for the working class or that "world imperialism" exports counterrevolution and terrorism, one tends—particularly if one is not privy to the truth or able to picture the concrete realities—to think not of the

nations, individuals, and policies responsible for these alleged crimes but of some nefarious superhuman force. To propagandists entrusted with the task of reducing complexities to simplicities and of creating external enemies and phantoms to inflame the fears of the masses and maintain the totalitarian cohesion of Communist societies, personified abstractions, and the use of isms in general, lend indispensable support.

Ironic Quotation Marks

Intolerant ideologues of the Left and the Right who concede to their adversaries not a single sensible idea or honorable motive will often disparage them by highlighting their words with ironic quotation marks. The unsurpassed practitioner of this rhetorical trick was Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, a fact attested by an early Soviet linguist, Yuri Tynyanov, in a perceptive essay on Lenin's language: "From the statement of the opponent a word is extracted and placed in quotation marks (graphically or through intonation). One needs only to look through Lenin's articles and speeches in order to recognize that they are filled with quotation marks. Lenin likes to speak with the words of the opponent, but he makes them suspicious, robs them of their strength, leaves them only the shell."[7] Large portions of Lenin's work contain little more than derisive references to the "'revolutionary' leaders of the Second International," the "'democratic' republics of America and France," or comparable fleering at whoever or whatever happened to have aroused his hostility at the moment.[8]

Ironic quotation marks remain a standard polemical device among Marxist-Leninist parties, whose spokesmen use them recurrently to call into question an unfavorable fact or, as did Lenin, to belittle and figuratively flay an enemy or deprecate his point of view. Throughout the Cold War Lenin's successors ridiculed the concept of a "'free world,'" and in the latter part of it they criticized with considerable ill humor the Carter administration's "thoroughly hypocritical concern for 'human rights'" as well as warnings from the West about a "notorious 'Soviet military threat.'"[9]

For much the same purposes, propagandists for communism often make use of expressions like "so-called" and "alleged." Confronted with photographs of Soviet-bloc weaponry stashed on the island of Grenada, a Soviet journalist on American television deftly denied the evidence by referring to the "so-called rifles and grenades."[10] Leonid Brezhnev often attacked "the so-called Western democra-

cies" and the warmongers within them who gnash their teeth over an "alleged Soviet threat."[11] But these latter-day aspersions are spit out so mechanically and ritualistically that they lack the flair and vigor of Lenin's "so-called socialist representatives of so-called revolutionary so-called democracy," a reference to the Russian Provisional Government that shows every sign of having been written with relish and an earnest contempt.[12] It goes almost without saying that such words as "so-called" can be combined with quotation marks to produce doubly sardonic expressions like Chernenko's "alleged 'Soviet menace' to the West," Stalin's "so-called 'freedoms of the individual,' " and *Tass*'s "so-called 'flexibility' "—a phrase characterizing the negotiating posture of the United States at the Strategic Arms Limitation and Reduction Talks.[13]

It is fair to observe that Communists themselves do not seem to look upon these rhetorical tactics as dishonest or as hitting below the polemical belt. On the contrary, as they view the world, it is not Communists but capitalists who habitually abuse and corrupt language. When therefore the capitalist nations declare themselves to be free and democratic or insist upon their peaceful proclivities, a regard for truth and accuracy obliges the Party to bring the lie into light by any means at its disposal. As an East German communications analyst explained in 1971:

> If socialist agitation utilizes this expedient [of ironic quotation marks and the term *sogenannt*], then to be sure it is as an instrument for the destruction of illusions bred with the help of the political language of imperialism and its ideologues, as an instrument for the attainment of truth. The monopoly capitalist West German state boasts e.g. of its "free elections." An analysis of the mechanism of political rule of state monopoly capitalism shows, however, that under these conditions elections cannot actually be free, because in them the toiling masses are too hindered by this social system and its institutions from an understanding of deeper social relationships, above all of the character of power, to be able to make [voting] decisions with expert knowledge. We will therefore speak—and not without effect and with objective accuracy—either of "so-called free elections" or of " 'free elections.' " Thus we . . . attempt through syntactic and semantic instruments to work for the decay of these words.[14]

However, those who have broken from the Party and proceeded to publish their confessions sometimes point to ulterior intentions.

Arthur Koestler, for instance, who certainly would have known about these matters, argued that ironic quotation marks and other tricks of the Communist rhetorical trade must be understood as part of a broader design of arresting any tendencies among Party members toward independent and critical thinking:

> Repetitiveness of diction, the catechism technique of asking a rhetorical question and repeating the full question in the answer; the use of stereotyped adjectives and the dismissal of an attitude or fact by the simple expedient of putting words in inverted commas and giving them an ironic inflection (the "revolutionary" past of Trotsky, the "humanistic" bleatings of the "liberal" press, etc.); all these were essential parts of a style, of which Josef Djugashwili [Stalin] is the uncontested master, and which through its very tedium produced a dull, hypnotic effect. Two hours of this dialectical tom-tom and you didn't know whether you were a boy or a girl, and were ready to believe either as soon as the rejected alternative appeared in inverted commas. You were also ready to believe that the Socialists were: (a) your main enemies, (b) your natural allies; that socialist and capitalist countries: (a) could live peacefully side by side, and (b) could not live peacefully side by side; and that when Engels had written that Socialism in One Country was impossible, he had meant the exact opposite.[15]

Another way of saying all this is that these rhetorical tricks promote doublethink.

Pejorative Prefixes

In the form in which they often appear in Communist discourse, prefixes like "un-," "anti-," and "pseudo-" have at least four purposes.

First, to ridicule or cast doubt upon the opposition and its views. For example, in the early days of the radical workers' movement in Russia, Lenin sneered at the "pseudo-Social-Democrats" who denied the need for a small class of professional revolutionaries to lead the masses to the overthrow of capitalism.[16] Decades later, a resolution of the Central Committee of the CPSU urged Soviet scholars to expose "the pseudoscientific theories of bourgeois, right-socialist, and revisionist defenders of capitalism."[17] In both of these instances the prefix "pseudo-" means essentially the same as does "so-called" in similar invective by Communists. With finality it labels as phony or fraudulent a person, thing, or idea detested or feared by the Party.

Second, to commit character assassination. Relatively few people prefer anarchy to order, have fond memories of Adolf Hitler, or welcome with any enthusiasm the atomic age with all its perils to humanity. Quite the contrary, and for that reason Communists have turned into pejorative prefixes the words "anarchy," "Hitler," and "atom," among others, compounding them or hitching them with a hyphen to the names or titles of enemies. An "anarcho-Trotskyite," for instance, is a renegade who places his private judgment above the will of the Marxist-Leninist party; the prefix plays upon fears of disorder and anarchy and transfers those fears to the hated Trotskyite or to the person falsely accused of being one.[18] The aim of smearing the Party's enemies lies also behind the coining of *Atomkanzler* (the "atom-chancellor," Adenauer), *Hitlerpolitiker* (Hitler-politicians), and other, equally acid expressions applied at times by East German Communists to West German and NATO officials.[19]

Third, to maintain at least in word the monolithic unity of the Party. Frequently this is the function of "un-," "anti-," and "counter-." When in the 1950s Malenkov, Kaganovich, and Molotov were bested in their struggle for power with Khrushchev, resolutions of the Central Committee denounced the threesome as an "anti-Party group."[20] As used here and elsewhere, the term implies a primary group—the Party, narrowly conceived as the Leader's faction—and a secondary group consisting of naysayers defined solely by its opposition to the Party. The trick of attaching a pejorative prefix to "Party" creates an impression that the Party itself is united and solid and inerrant as always and that such criticism as originates in its ranks really comes from a clique of subversives who have nothing in common with true Communists.

Fourth, to buttress the Party's Manichaean interpretation of reality. When troops of the Warsaw Pact suppressed in Dubcek's Czechoslovakia a variety of reform "elements" within and without the Czechoslovak Communist party, the Moscow press depicted the reformers collectively, and with no effort to sort out one group from another, as "antisocialist forces."[21] The pejorative prefix preserved the myth of two camps: there remained as always a "socialist" side comprising Soviet and pro-Soviet forces and an "antisocialist" side comprising all others, including not only conservatives, liberals, and reactionaries but socialists who happened to see no incompatibility between socialism and national and personal freedom. The Communist vocabulary contains numerous bipolar word pairs akin to "socialist—antisocialist," and a fair number of these, such as "Soviet—anti-Soviet" and "Marxist—un-Marxist," are formed with pejorative prefixes. Each

of the pairs just mentioned, it will be noticed, includes a positive root word identified in some way with Communism—"socialist," "Soviet," "Marxist"—and its negative and ill-defined counterpart, spelled exactly the same except for the one- or two-syllable affixture that transforms the root into its unpleasant polar opposite. There are good reasons for this kind of construction. Enemies of the Party must never be portrayed as articulating attractive alternatives to the Party and the ideology, and hence treated to an unprefixed appellation; nor must the masses ever perceive them as anything but a minus quantity capable only of destructive criticism and subversion.

Elastic Words

As demonstrated by certain of the pejorative prefixes and by the Manichaean qualities of Communist discourse, Communists have a way of using language elastically, of packing into a solitary term or phrase disparate categories of people, ideas, and experience. Besides such pejoratively prefixed words as "antisocialist" and "counterrevolutionary," the catalogue of Communist catchall expressions, many of which gained currency in the Stalin years, includes "spy," "subversive," "assassin," "bandit," "wrecker," "diversionist," "traitor," "enemy of the people" (*vrag naroda*), "socially dangerous element," "Trotskyist," "fascist," "reactionary," "bourgeoisie," "petit bourgeoisie," *kulak*, and "saboteur," to mention only some of the most feared and least precise of the lot. Seldom if ever does a Communist clearly define these terms. Indeed, strictly to define them would defeat their purpose.

The purpose is to extend Party control over society and souls. Soviet criminal codes, for example, contain a legion of elastic terms that have helped convict innumerable innocent people of crimes against the state. A conscript laborer during the Second World War complained about the soup served in a mess hall and received for his impertinence a ten-year prison sentence on a charge of "counterrevolutionary agitation." Shortly after the war a Soviet woman who had dated a foreigner found herself imprisoned without trial as a "socially dangerous element."[22] Condemnation in neither of these entirely typical cases—typical of the 1940s, at any rate—required an investigation or amassing of evidence. The authorities needed only to stretch the appropriate elastic label over the victim. By many unofficial accounts they busied themselves throughout the Stalin era indiscriminately labeling people, managing as a result to put away a number of innocu-

ous citizens along with political enemies and some genuine traitors to the nation. There is no documenting beyond dispute how many thousands or millions fell prey to this practice. What cannot be doubted, though, is that the tyranny of labeling compounded the terror of the Stalin years.

Not all of the most terror-breeding elastic terms have appeared in penal codes, as the example of *kulak* illustrates. Originally this Russian term, which literally means "fist," referred to the "village usurers" once described by Friedrich Engels as "bloodsuckers of the peasants."[23] In a poignant passage of *The Gulag Archipelago*, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn related how the Bolshevik government by degrees expanded the sense of this word, with appalling consequences for the nation's peasantry:

> In Russian a *kulak* is a miserly, dishonest rural trader who grows rich not by his own labor but through someone else's, through usury and operating as a middleman. In every locality even before the Revolution such kulaks could be numbered on one's fingers. And the Revolution totally destroyed their basis of activity. Subsequently, after 1917, by a transfer of meaning, the name *kulak* began to be applied (in official and propaganda literature, whence it moved into general usage) to all those who in any way hired workers, even if it was only when they were temporarily short of working hands in their own families. . . .
>
> But the inflation of this scathing term *kulak* proceeded relentlessly, and by 1930 *all strong peasants in general* were being so called—all peasants strong in management, strong in work, or even strong merely in convictions. The term *kulak* was used to smash the *strength* of the peasantry.[24]

On Christmas Day 1929 Stalin set before the Soviet nation the goal of "liquidation of the kulaks as a class," conveniently neglecting to state what he meant by *kulak*. Thenceforth no farmer who resisted in any way the dictator's crash program of collectivization could consider himself safe. Many modestly prosperous peasants were sucked into the nebulous category of *kulak*, and many of these, together with their supposed sympathizers among poorer peasants—the so-called *podkulachniki* or persons abetting the kulaks—were herded away to northern wastes. "Words were put into circulation," Solzhenitsyn has written of this period in Soviet history, "and although they meant nothing they were easily remembered, they simplified matters, they made thought completely unnecessary"—and facilitated the work of despotism.[25]

No less an authority than Nikita Khrushchev has testified to the murderous intentions underlying elastic language. "The formula 'enemy of the people,'" he revealed at the famous closed session of the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist party in 1956, "was specifically introduced for the purpose of physically annihilating" persons opposed to Stalin's policies.[26] Khrushchev, however, kept his own stock of elastic expressions. "We have no more political criminals in the USSR," he announced in the early 1960s. "The only ones who oppose our system today are madmen"—Khrushchev presumably signifying by this elastic term the patients confined in the KGB's "special psychiatric hospitals."[27] Which latter phrase brings us to the phenomenon of euphemism.

Euphemistic Expression

Ever since the first years of this century, when certain of the Russian Social Democrats were raising funds for the Revolution by carrying out "proletarian expropriations"—robbing banks—the euphemistic word or phrase has been an important component of Communist discourse. Discrepancies between Communist ideals and political reality, between Party profession and Party practice, have created a need for scores of euphemisms.

How, for instance, would a Communist writer describe the uprooting of peasants and the transfer of populations that took place in the Soviet Union in the 1930s? By subsuming these actions under the euphemistic phrase "socialist reconstruction."[28] How did he deal with the mass starvation precipitated by ill-considered economic schemes? Either by ignoring it or by calling it an "inadequately rapid rise of the material level of the masses."[29] What about the murder or deportation of peasants who balked at selling grain to the government at fixed prices or resisted the confiscation of their farms and cattle? Nothing more than "emergency measures" or a "dekulakization" of the countryside.[30] And the execution or imprisonment of religious believers along with the capitalist and "kulak" classes? How was this regarded even as recently as the 1980s by Soviet officials? As part of the "abolition of all exploiter elements" foretold by Marx and Engels.[31] And the slave-labor camps? They were actually "reformatory" labor camps.[32] The near-destruction of literature and the fine arts under Stalin? Placed in its proper class perspective, it turns out to have been an unprecedentedly great "cultural revolution."[33] In short, life under Bolshevik dominion was harsh; language had to make it seem

less so. To have spoken with much candor about conditions in Russia would have been to admit the vanity of Communist promises and the failure of Utopia to materialize by Party decree.

In Communist discourse there are a good many euphemisms born of Khrushchev's revelations about Stalin. By 1980 a limited amount of information about the latter's crimes had forced its way to the surface of Soviet politics and into public discussion, and Soviet commentators could therefore hardly avoid an occasional reference to them. But they could say only so much without transgressing the limits imposed by the Party; consequently their language was equivocal and cloudy. Stalin's actions were dismissed as mere mistakes (*oshibki*) stemming from a "cult of personality," the effects and character of which were consistently understated or obscured, as in the following foggy excerpt from an article in the December 1979 issue of *Kommunist*: "It must be specifically stressed that Stalin did not essentially distinguish between methods of administration that are objectively necessitated by the specific features of class struggle and wartime and methods of organizing work corresponding with the conditions of peaceful creative work."[34] In plain language, the gist of this euphemistic sentence is that Stalin had people killed or driven from their homes whenever he pleased.

There are also euphemisms that disguise adventurism and imperial domination by Marxist-Leninist governments. Since communism is supposed to be innately peaceful and progressive, the conquest of a country by Communist forces becomes in Communist discourse an act of "liberation," while the extermination of nationals who resist subjugation is a policy of "pacification"; the puppet regime installed by the conquerors is a "people's democracy." The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was a selfless act of "assistance" rendered at the "request" of the Afghan people and undertaken for no other reason than to help them "build a new life."[35] Seasoned Cuban soldiers subverting the independence of African and Caribbean countries are "construction workers" and "internationalists," the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba a "study center," the Berlin Wall an "antifascist dike [*Schutzwall*]."[36] The former Soviet empire—Moscow and its satellites, kept in orbit by force or the threat of it—is a "fraternal family of socialist countries."[37] The Communist parties of these countries, moreover, are characterized as "fraternal parties," and Moscow's domination of them is known by the name of "comradely cooperation."[38]

Such euphemisms spin reality on its head. In Communist as in all other totalitarian states, the language of officialdom at every level, from Party district offices up to secretariats and the political bureaus,

is shot through with topsy-turvy expressions. Solzhenitsyn has told of a Soviet citizen receiving an outrageously long prison sentence for having stolen a spool of thread. The arresting authorities, probably out of a well-nurtured instinct for coining oblique phrases, recorded that "200 meters of sewing material" had been purloined.[39] By thus magnifying a relatively minor infraction of the law, they made official injustice seem a justifiably zealous defense of socialist legality. At a much higher level of government, Premier Stalin demanded in September 1939 the rewording of a joint German-Russian communiqué announcing the seizure and partitioning of Poland by the two totalitarian giants. The communiqué, Stalin thought, had "presented the facts all too frankly." He prevailed on the German Foreign Office to accept a revised draft stating the earnest desire of Germany and Russia "to restore peace and order in Poland, which had been destroyed by the collapse of the Polish State, and to help the Polish population to reconstruct the conditions of its political existence."[40]

As this last incident illustrates, totalitarian rulers know full well what they are about when they employ euphemisms. Sometimes it will not do to speak bluntly about one's aims and actions, about the unforeseen disastrous results of a once-flaunted policy, or about the very nature of the regime itself. "Many comrades . . . say: . . . it is very difficult to agitate with the slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat," Karl Radek acknowledged at the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern in 1922; "let us rather say workers' government, that sounds very sweet and innocent."[41] To lay a thick coat of candy-striped paint upon a house of horrors would seem to be one design of those who speak the language of orthodox communism; and in this work of evasion and obfuscation, euphemisms play a major part.

Aesopian Language

In the days of czarist repression, radical Russian writers sometimes evaded the censor and circulated their views and plans in print by resorting to a coded vocabulary. Among the writers who adopted and developed this tactic were Social Democrats. As Lenin explained in a preface added to his treatise on imperialism after the fall of the czar, a due regard for the censor had led him to formulate the book's "few necessary observations on politics with extreme caution, by hints, in an allegorical language—in that accursed Aesopian language—to which tsarism compelled all revolutionaries to have recourse whenever they took up the pen to write a 'legal' work."[42] Of such language novices would discern only the literal and superficial meaning; "inter-

ested" readers would uncover the hidden import. The initiated would understand, for example, that "the big job" meant revolution and that "the realist" was Karl Marx.[43] For Bolsheviks, at least, Aesopian language also had the collateral function of deceiving moderate bourgeois democrats, drawing them into temporary alliances with extremists who would not hesitate to hoodwink them and trick them into abetting the projects of radicalism.

As late as the middle 1980s Stefan T. Possony, Richard Pipes, and other analysts were arguing that Soviet Communists continued to use a kind of Aesopian language. The czarist censor had passed from the scene, but the censor of world opinion remained, and it might be necessary at times—during a popular-front period or a peace offensive, perhaps—to dredge up the old Aesopian phrases or to coin new ones better suited for modern situations. Not a reactionary Russian government but the NATO nations, not the Russian bourgeoisie but Western liberals, were supposedly the present-day dupes for whose deception a new Aesopian language incorporating many of the symbols and much of the phraseology of Western democracy had been minted. "The need for Aesopian language arises," Possony contended, "because the communist communicator, while speaking to communists, does not want to be misunderstood by them, and at the same time wants to evoke misunderstandings among non-communist listeners. In addressing messages to non-communists he wants to persuade them in a way quite different from the persuasion he reserves for his followers."[44] The non-Communist must be led to believe in the benevolence and humanity of the Communist. The latter will therefore speak in public of anticolonialism when he means communism, of democracy when he means dictatorship, of planning when he means expropriation. His words are what Mao Tse-tung might have called "sugar-coated bullets." More than mere euphemisms matched without forethought to particular and isolated circumstances, they arguably fit into a wider scheme of using language for deception (*maskirovka*) upon a prodigious scale.

It would be difficult to document beyond any doubt the existence of an Aesopian language. After all, if it is doing what it is supposed to do, how can a bourgeois scholar identify and decode it with any certainty and confidence? Nevertheless one may hazard an educated guess, grounded in what we know about the definitions of certain words in Communist discourse, that much of the public vocabulary employed by Soviet leaders and diplomats during the era of détente in the 1970s was in fact an Aesopian language of sorts, roughly comparable in character to Nazi camouflage language.

For example, when Leonid Brezhnev upbraided the leaders of

NATO countries for failing to take a "constructive approach to the implementation of disarmament tasks," did his words carry a double meaning? Was "constructive" supposed to mean constructive to a West German peace demonstrator or a Connecticut senator but "conducive to Soviet interests at the expense of NATO" to officials of Communist-bloc governments and generals of the Warsaw Pact armies? In his address on American television in June 1973, what was the general secretary trying to signify by "relaxation, normalization, and mutually advantageous co-operation"? Did these words convey to his Communist listeners an Aesopian message meaning appeasement and full acceptance by the West of a Soviet sphere of influence in East Europe? What about the expression "ensuring a lasting peace," spoken before the World Congress of Peace Forces in the autumn of 1973? Peace on whose terms? A peace of the plowshare and the pruning hook or of the hammer and sickle? Furthermore, what, if anything, is the Aesopian significance of Brezhnev's phrase "universal and complete disarmament"? Does this mean, as on the surface it seems to mean, the simultaneous determination of all nations to "study war no more"? Or does it mean disarmament only after the capitalists have given up the fight and communism has engulfed the globe?[45]

In 1976 what did Brezhnev's future successor, Konstantin Chernenko, have in mind by "improving the international climate in Europe"? Did he mean extraction of American missiles and manpower from the Continent, leaving an imbalance of forces favorable to Soviet hegemony? Perhaps he was envisioning further agreements on the heels of Helsinki legitimizing and tightening the Soviet grip upon East Europe. How about Chernenko's call for "checking the arms race"? Did that mean ending it, or did it mean inducing Western governments to trim their defense budgets while the Soviets proceeded with a program of unprecedented military expansion? Finally, what precisely was the import of Chernenko's plea for "an active and fruitful dialogue with nations living under a different social system to ours"? Fruitful for whom? For one and all, as the literal language may suggest, or only for "us," as an Aesopian reading might reveal? None but a trained Communist knows for certain.[46]

I am not raising these questions rhetorically. Rather, without reaching settled conclusions about the matter, I am pointing to the possibility—indeed, the probability—that Professor Pipes was correct when he accused the Soviets of having created and deployed for purposes of semantic confusion a "synthetic jargon" consisting of both Soviet coinages and terms lifted from "Western liberal sources."

These expressions, Pipes suggested, had been given special meanings and "frozen into mandatory clichés." Many of the clichés—phrases like "mutually beneficial cooperation," "reducing the threat of war," and "relaxation of international tension" (*razryadka mezhdunarodnoy napryazhennosti*)—have come to be used almost reflexively by politicians and pundits on both sides of the Iron Curtain. "Once this language becomes assimilated by non-Communist societies," Pipes warned, "the communality of language conveys the sense of a communality of interest," thereby papering over the irreconcilable differences between democratic and totalitarian political cultures and nurturing among Western peoples false hopes and unrealistic expectations that can only lessen the leverage and the resolve of their leaders in dealing with the Kremlin.[47]

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims," wrote Marx and Engels in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. If the charges of Pipes and Possony were well founded, however, then not only did Soviet-line Communists not disdain to conceal the truth about themselves; they did such a thorough job of concealing it through the adroit use of language that many non-Communists in the West no longer held them accountable for the Cold War and the troubled peace of recent decades. And yet it is probably an exaggeration to say, as some do, that the West was "taken in" by Soviet Aesopian language. Even now many remain suspicious of Soviet peace talk, and it is a measure of their distrust that Gorbachev has felt obliged to assure the world that his government opposes "verbal juggling" and "double-faced policy": "We want to return to the true, original meaning of the words we use in international contacts."[48] This is not quite a confession that Moscow has often misused language in the past, but it comes as close to one as official Communist sources are likely to make.

The techniques of rhetorical treachery touched on in this chapter merit attention in any analysis of Communist discourse. The reason for this is their importance as "tactics." As Stalin's *Foundations of Leninism* and other theoretical writings by Communists of the first rank make plain, the Party lays great stress upon the role of tactics in furthering the revolutionary struggle. And what are rhetorical tricks if not tactical maneuvers on the polemical front? Does Communist strategy call for discrediting the warmongers of the West? Perhaps a well-placed pair of ironic quotation marks will help do the job. Does it call for liquidating large numbers of human beings? Stick an elastic label on them and expedite matters. Have the dictator's policies produced fresh tragedies for his people? Then it may be time for tac-

tics of retreat: cast about for novel forms of euphemism, use them repetitively in the press and in public speeches, and perhaps all will be forgotten in due course. In fine, rhetorical treachery and trickery are a formidable instrument of "class struggle," and anyone keen on acquiring a proper appreciation of that struggle, and of the nature of communism, will take time to investigate them.

CHAPTER NINE

THE RECTIFICATION OF LANGUAGE

On the night of 6–7 November 1917, members of the Bolshevik party's Central Committee assembled at the Smolny Institute in Petrograd. Urgent business awaited the group. Momentous events were pressing upon them; Petrograd was seething with plots and insurrection, and before many hours elapsed, the Winter Palace and all of Russia would pass into Bolshevik hands. Obviously only the most critical of matters could engage the attention of the handful at Smolny to whom History now beckoned.

And what matters were these? Among others, the matter of language. Specifically, the Bolsheviks needed a suitable name for the new government they expected shortly to be forming. After discussion they settled on *Sovet Narodnykh Komissarov* (Council of People's Commissars), suggested by Lev Borisovich Kamenev. As for officials of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, it would never do to continue the practice

of the czarist and Provisional governments and call them ministers, for that word had been "sadly compromised" and in any case "smelt of bureaucratic stuffiness." To Lenin's delight, therefore, the Central Committee decided to substitute for *ministr* Leon Trotsky's *narodnyy komissar* (people's commissar). The Bolshevik rupturing of all bonds with the past, it was apparent from these decisions, was going to take place in language as well as in thought and action.[1]

The interest of the Bolsheviks in names and nuances did not end with the Revolution. In the months and years following their uprising, they replaced still more of the old nomenclature and flooded the Russian language with neologisms that heralded a new age and a new humanity in the making. They even adopted and put into effect as far as possible a new Russian orthography, although the project had been planned many years earlier by the Russian Academy of Sciences.[2] Thus it was that parallel to the revolution in society and government there ran an equally consequential revolution in language.

And so it has been in every subsequent Communist revolution. Each has replicated the Soviet experience: none has ignored the cardinal importance of the word in any attempt to create a new order of things. Odd as it may seem, therefore, Communist revolutions have tended to raise the political stature of lexicographers and etymologists; compiling a dictionary becomes in Communist societies as politically significant an act as preparing a Five-Year Plan or rounding up enemies of the state. Certainly it is prosecuted with as much efficiency and zeal. Editors of the first East German *Duden* (1951), for instance, explained as follows the purpose of their revising the German language: "The total vocabulary had to be examined in order to clarify to what extent it corresponds to our use of the language, to our scientific [i.e., Marxist-Leninist] knowledge, and to our views of society. Obsolete and superfluous terms have been deleted. Definitions [*Sinndeutungen*] have been thoroughly reexamined . . . and, if necessary, created."[3] To the deletion of words and alteration of meanings the editors might have added the creation of words as well. Thus it appears that in East German as in all other Communist societies, a three-pronged linguistic process was at work: words were redefined (semanticide), eliminated (logocide), or newly minted—and all of this with a view to molding in members of the civil and social order a "Communist consciousness."

Semanticide in Communist Discourse

Of Communist semantics and diction there are three capital characteristics: first, the narrowness and rigidity of definitions; second, the fluidity of definitions through time; and third, the Manichaean character of vocabulary.

Narrowness. At any given moment the politically significant terms of Communist discourse each carry precisely one authoritative meaning. From this formal and officially sanctioned definition, which reflects at all times the current Party line and the latest approved interpretations of Marxist-Leninist teaching, there may be no deviation in any direction.

To a Western non-Communist accustomed to multiplicity of meaning for many of the entries in "bourgeois" dictionaries, Communist definitions may seem unduly narrow. Take, for example, the word "peace," perhaps the most frequently and widely used god-term in Soviet propaganda since the Second World War. Apart from referring to an absence of war, the word undoubtedly connotes for most Westerners—and Western dictionaries tend to ratify this understanding—a positive, harmonious state of mind and society. Certainly in Western literature, from the Bible and Augustine's *City of God* to modern utopian novels and Negro spirituals, the word has borne such a sense. Not so in Communist discourse, however. The *Slovar' Sovremennogo Russkogo Lityeraturnogo Yazyka*, for instance, very succinctly and circumscriptively defines peace as "the absence of war or armed conflict between peoples or States."[4] This is no meek-shall-inherit-the-earth definition of peace; not a hint does it contain about inner harmony or the evolution of a truly placid planet, or anything at all reminiscent of the biblical "peace that passeth understanding." On the contrary, the Communist definition of peace is decidedly more restrictive than that. As orthodox Soviet spokesmen like Brezhnev and Gromyko have always been careful to point out, the absence of open hostilities among nations—peace in the Marxist-Leninist sense—cannot of itself remove the "contradictions" that divide them; even in periods of peaceful coexistence (*mirnoye sosushchestvovaniye*), the ideological struggle between opposing systems will go on unabated. For that matter, so will the class struggle and national liberation movements within countries, from Vietnam and Ethiopia to Angola and Afghanistan. An end to all discord must await the classless millenium.[5]

Meanwhile the Soviet Union, as leader of the world Communist movement, has pledged to pursue what Article 28 of the Soviet Con-

stitution calls a "Leninist peace policy."[6] To appreciate the significance of this phrase, it is necessary to examine Lenin's pronouncements on peace, particularly those made in connection with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918. Rebuking fellow Bolsheviks for their ill-advised eagerness to launch a "revolutionary war" against neighboring capitalist states, Lenin argued that Communist forces were too weak to annihilate the imperialist nations. However, the interlude of peace purchased at Brest-Litovsk, he thought, would enable the Bolsheviks to build strength and consolidate the gains of socialism in Russia, always with an eye to the world upheaval that would follow in the fullness of time and topple the world bourgeoisie. The treaty, Lenin declared, was therefore "entirely a matter of vital manoeuvring," and peace itself was often merely "a means of mustering forces for new battles."[7] The CPSU Program of 1961, with its hopeful references to the "more favourable opportunities" for class struggle afforded by peaceful coexistence, echoes faithfully Lenin's instrumentalist conception of peace.[8] In sum, for Lenin and most of his successors, peace has signified the continuation of revolution by other means. Given this curious understanding of the concept, so perverse according to Western lights, the belligerent successes of Soviet foreign policy in Central Africa and Southeast Asia at the height of détente in the 1970s should have come as no shock and provoked no charges of duplicity and double-dealing. "Detente," the late foreign minister Gromyko explained, "does not mean freezing the objective processes of history."[9] Neither, it seems, does a Leninist peace policy.

"Peace" is far from being the only term whose meaning the leaders and lexicographers of Communist parties have narrowed and, in narrowing, perverted. "Imperialism" is another prominent victim of semanticide. *Political Terms*, an English-language glossary published in Moscow in 1982, defines this word as "monopolistic capitalism, the highest and last stage of capitalism which began at the turn of the century, when the economic domination of capitalist monopolies and finance capital was supplemented with their omnipotence in politics and when the territorial division of the world among the major capitalist powers was completed."[10] In the present phase of historical development, it appears, imperialism is a peculiarly bourgeois phenomenon; socialist nations by definition are not imperialist. Nor, we might add, do they commit acts of aggression, for it turns out that capitalist nations have a monopoly on this practice as well—a point emphasized in S. E. Ozhegov's *Dictionary of the Russian Language* (1952), which defines *agressiya* as "the armed attack by one or sev-

eral imperialist countries against other countries with a view to the occupation of their territories, their forcible subjugation and the exploitation of their peoples."[11] Israel on the West Bank and the United States in Vietnam have been guilty of aggression; the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, on the other hand, was merely rendering comradely assistance to a neighbor state menaced by imperialist intrigue. As it is with imperialism and aggression, so it is with militarism and cold war: Communist lexica and encyclopedias, from the East German *Duden* to the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, have traced the causes of these modern phenomena to the capitalist West. By definition Communist states do not rattle the saber or instigate cold wars.[12]

If in the world according to Communist semantics every malignant influence of recent times is attributable to capitalism, then just as certainly every benign influence stems from socialism. Internationalism, for example, is a progressive phenomenon fostered and furthered only by Communists and their supporters. An internationalist, indeed, to quote Stalin, is by definition anyone "who unreservedly, without hesitation, without conditions, is ready to defend the USSR because the USSR is the base of the world revolutionary movement, and to defend, to advance this revolutionary movement is impossible without defending the USSR."[13] This definition, duplicated in Soviet dictionaries of the Stalin era and modified somewhat since Stalin's death, seems almost to reverse the old understanding of internationalism as a sentiment or a movement transcending loyalty to a particular nation. Also it narrows the field of genuine internationalists considerably. For how does one classify the Dag Hammerskjölds and the Norman Cousinses who fit the broader but bourgeois definition of an internationalist as a person favoring cooperation among nations and the establishment of worldwide equality and justice, but who on occasion have expressed anti-Soviet opinions? The short of it is that in Communist discourse these people are not internationalists but "cosmopolitans." The true internationalists of our time tend to be tough-minded "progressive" types like the "internationalist fighters" and "internationalist technicians" extolled by Fidel Castro and sent by him to promote the Communist revolution in Angola and Ethiopia.[14] "Internationalist," it will be noticed, has become in Communist discourse practically synonymous with "Communist." So too, for that matter, have "revolutionary" and "socialist."

Communist discourse, then, contains a multitude of terms from which every unacceptable shade of meaning and every suggestion of ambiguity have been purged. To explain why Communist parties do this sort of thing is not easy. Fortunately the Communists themselves,

in seeking to justify the practice, have offered some interesting and instructive explanations. To judge from such works as *Sprache der Politik*, a revealing dissertation by an East German communications analyst, Georg Klaus, there are two reasons for narrowly defining the terms of political discourse. The first reason is that failing to define "aggregated symbols" like "freedom" and "peace" with unmistakable precision can create confusion that weakens the unity of the Communist movement. "Aggregated symbols with divided meaning," wrote Klaus, "lead to political action of a divided character." An effective rhetoric of political agitation, he added, requires as a condition for long-term success that its "word arsenal" should be part of a "closed system" in which social realities and not bourgeois illusions determine the content of a term.[15] The second reason for constricted definitions, closely related to the first, is that their clarity and lack of equivocation make them more "scientifically exact" than the "empty babble" in bourgeois lexica. Another way of saying this is that Communist definitions are "historically concrete" and based on sound principles of Marxism-Leninism.[16]

Fluidity. "There is flexibility within fixity," the Chinese Communists like to argue.[17] In a sense their saying applies as much to Communist semantic practice as it does to Communist policies and ideological teachings. In spite of narrowness and exactitude in the formal definitions of Marxist-Leninist terms at any given time, these terms often undergo modifications of meaning over time when this suits the needs of the Party. There is rigidity, yet there is also flexibility or fluidity, which is necessary for keeping signification and substance in harmony with an ever-altering Party line. Communist semantics truly is dialectical.

Not that fluidity in defining words is without its problems. On the contrary, the Chinese Communist party line shifted so frequently in the 1960s and early 1970s that it was impossible to keep Chinese dictionaries politically up to date. Before the Cultural Revolution, for instance, they were defining Confucianism (*ru*) with reasonable accuracy and objectivity as "an ancient Chinese philosophical school founded by Confucius which advocated benevolence and righteousness." With official denigration of Confucius during the Cultural Revolution, however, the Confucian philosophy came to be defined as "a school of thought in Ancient China, founded by Confucius, which represented the interests of the exploiting class."[18]

This was only one of many modifications the Chinese made. During the "Great Leap Forward" of the 1950s, for example, they used the expression "the east wind prevails over the west wind" to refer

to communism's triumph over American imperialism; after the Sino-Soviet split, the phrase summed up China's determined opposition to Soviet "social imperialism." In the late 1950s, the term *sihai* (the four pests) referred to several national nuisances the regime wished to eradicate: flies, mosquitoes, rats, and sparrows. In 1960 bedbugs replaced sparrows, the extermination of which, in the great quasi-military campaign, had upset the ecological balance and exposed crops to the ravages of insects. In 1976 the term was again transformed, with far more ominous implications: *sihai* now meant the infamous Gang of Four.[19]

Soviet definitions can be equally metamorphic, as the case of "cosmopolitan" well proves. The 1935 edition of D. N. Ushakov's *Dictionary of the Russian Language* describes a cosmopolitan as "a citizen of the world," while an edition of the Soviet encyclopedia published in the same year describes such a person as "one who asserts he belongs to no single nationality, but regards the whole world as his home." But the 1949 edition of the encyclopedia offers the following definition: "a person of anti-patriotic, bourgeois opinions who asserts hypocritically that the whole world is a single fatherland and refuses to defend his own country."[20] Subsequent editions of Soviet lexica, such as the *Short Philosophical Dictionary* (1952) and even a recent edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, which characterizes cosmopolitanism as "a reactionary bourgeois ideology," have echoed the revised and now pejorative sense of the term.[21] What happened between 1935 and 1949 to bring about the shift in sense? Undoubtedly it was the resurgence of Great Russian nationalism and the growing anti-Semitism of Joseph Stalin, which culminated in the so-called doctors' plot of 1953. In the paranoid atmosphere of postwar Russia, "cosmopolitan" seems to have become at least in part a code word for Jew and Zionist and a synonym for traitor.[22]

The redefining of terms, as Lasswell and Leites have pointed out, can sometimes occur without Communists admitting they have tampered with meanings.[23] We have seen how this happens in the case of elastic expressions like *kulak* and "fascist." But frequently, as in the case of words like "freedom" and "imperialism," the change of meaning is openly admitted and ideologically justified. Indeed, Communists go out of their way to argue that the content of words, like modes of production and classes of society, can never be static. Klaus, for example, asserted that only "the conservative or foundering classes" ever attempt to freeze the meaning of a term or "pretend that what they mean by particular words possesses absolute and universally binding value."[24] All of life is in ceaseless flux: situations and circum-

stances change, reality changes, the Party line changes; definitions too must change, as must their referents in the material world. This is what Vyacheslav Molotov seems to have been saying in October 1939 when he explained to the Supreme Council of the Soviet Union the Stalin regime's recent abrupt change of attitude toward Nazi Germany:

> In connection with these important changes in the international situation [since 23 August 1939] certain old formulas, formulas which we employed but recently, . . . are now obviously out of date and inapplicable. We know, for example, that in the past few months such concepts as "aggression" and "aggressor" have acquired a new concrete connotation, a new meaning. It is not hard to understand that we can no longer employ these concepts in the sense we did, say, three or four months ago. Today . . . Germany . . . is striving for peace, while Britain and France . . . are opposed to the conclusion of peace. Rôles, as you see, are changing. . . . This war promises nothing to the working class but bloody sacrifice and hardships. Well, now judge for yourself, whether the meaning of such concepts as "aggression" and "aggressor" has changed recently or not.[25]

No doubt in many of these dialectical twists and turns of meaning there is an element of political opportunism. This is evident from the flexible manner in which Communists treat an emotionally charged expression like "the people." Article 2 of the Soviet Constitution of 1977 proclaims that "all power in the USSR belongs to the people."[26] But who are "the people"? According to an article in the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, "the people" in its historical-materialist sense includes only "those strata and classes that, owing to their position in society, are capable of actively participating in the progressive development of society." In different societies and at different stages of history, the article continues, the precise composition of "the people" will change. At no time, however, will it include the reactionary groups that are systematically exploiting and plundering the masses. On the other hand, under certain circumstances, such as those that obtained in the Popular Front period of the 1930s, a reactionary class like the bourgeoisie may become objectively "progressive," if only for a brief time, and may therefore fall temporarily under the rubric of "the people."[27]

Thus it was, as Mao Tse-tung explained in his remarkable essay "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People," that in the 1930s all classes and groups opposed to Japanese imperialism,

including even the Kuomintang, "came within the category of the people [*renmin*]." However, during the civil war of the late 1940s, which introduced an entirely different set of political circumstances, "the people" consisted of all groups opposed to American imperialism and its "running dogs—the bureaucrat-capitalists, the landlords and the Kuomintang reactionaries who represented these two classes." Later, after Chiang Kai-shek's expulsion from the mainland, everyone who supported the work of socialist construction in China was one of the people, while those who resisted the revolution in Chinese society were considered "enemies [*diren*] of the people."[28]

Given the Marxist-Leninist definition of "the people" and the variableness of the term's content, Fidel Castro's boast on behalf of the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Grenadian Communist parties that theirs "are people's revolutions, revolutions with deep roots and great support among the people," is perhaps less outrageous than it sounds.[29] For if "the people" are the progressive elements in society, and if to be progressive means to be a Communist or to help push the cause of communism, then by definition a Communist revolution is always a people's revolution, even when "the people" form only a fraction of the total population. "A concrete-historical approach to the people," notes the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, "permits communist parties to pursue a flexible policy that takes into account changes in the position of various classes."[30] Permits them also, one may add, to portray themselves at all times as champions of the popular masses, and their enemies as antipopular reactionaries.

Manichaean vocabulary. Predictably, Communist discourse mirrors in its vocabulary Marxism-Leninism's Manichaean system of values. And, as with Nazi terminology, the Communist political vocabulary divides readily into three groups of words.

The first group consists of what Carney and Scheer, in *Fundamentals of Logic*, called honorific terms.[31] Any complete list of these positively valuated expressions would doubtless include "Communist," "socialist," "proletarian," "progressive," "people," "peace," "revolutionary," "solidarity," "struggle," "Red," "heroic," "noble," "science," and "materialism," among many others. True to the principle of circumscribed meaning, such terms, which very early attained the status of catchwords in Communist discourse, refer exclusively to the Communist movement, its adherents, and their allies. The Bolsheviks, for example, according to the late Mikhail Suslov, waged a "heroic struggle" against czarism, just as the North Vietnamese later offered "heroic resistance" against American imperialism;[32] but no orthodox Communist would call the Finns of 1940 or the Hungari-

ans of 1956 a heroic people. For as the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* declares, heroism is an almost peculiarly "progressive" trait: "The greatness of a heroic feat derives not from abstract individual self-sacrifice but from its world-historical content, from its place in the progressive movement of the peoples toward the victory of communism."[33] Whether they knew it or not, the Hungarians and Finns were fighting rearguard actions in defense of imperialism against the advance of the world proletariat as represented by the Soviet Union; they were reactionary, and hence they were not heroic.

The second group of Marxist-Leninist terms embraces what Carney and Scheer described as pejorative words. "Capitalism," "imperialism," "bourgeoisie," "militarism," "fascism," "neocolonialism," "totalitarian," "reactionary," "cosmopolitan," "religion," "Trotskyism," "terrorism," "idealism," and "Cold War" make up a partial list of these negatively valuated expressions. If honorific words apply solely to the Communist movement, pejorative words apply just as restrictively to its enemies. As with honorific words, moreover, their definitions have been severely circumscribed. The East German *Duden*, for instance, defines the adjective "totalitarian" simply as "fascist," thereby foreclosing any misconceptions about a totalitarianism of the Left.[34] But the most striking feature of these pejorative terms is the sharply negative bias of their definitions. In fact, Communist lexicographers typically define a pejorative word by using still other pejorative words, such as "reactionary," "aggressive," and "unscientific." Thus *Political Terms* describes the Cold War as "a policy adopted by reactionary circles in imperialist countries towards the USSR and other socialist countries after the Second World War." The same glossary observes that the NATO alliance is "a seat of aggression and reaction endangering peace and all mankind."[35] The *Fremdwörterbuch*, published in the German Democratic Republic, defines academic freedom as the "antiquated notion of the autonomy of professors and students in university work from the claims of society."[36]

Between honorific and pejorative terms lies a third class composed of words that can be used in either a positive or a negative sense. Such ambivalent expressions abound in Communist language. "Democracy," "freedom," "legality," "nationalism," "patriotism," "police," "propaganda," "hatred," "ruthless," "merciless"—each has a dual application. And what determines whether the word is applied positively or negatively? As might be expected, when it refers in some way to the Communist camp, the word is positive; when referring to the opposite camp, it carries unmistakably the opposite connotation.

On the one hand, for instance, Friedrich Engels is praised for

having inspired the proletarian masses with a "ruthless hatred for the enemy," but on the other the Somoza regime is condemned for having unleashed a "ruthless, genocidal, unscrupulous war" against the people of Nicaragua.[37] One form of ruthlessness, it appears, serves the cause of Progress; the other abets bloody Reaction. Context and application, in other words, govern the polarity of "ruthless." So too with "police." The East German *Lexikon A-Z in zwei Bänden* points out that the police force of a Communist state exists purely "for the protection of the working class and its economic order . . . ; in the capitalist state mainly for the protection of capitalists and their system of exploitation."[38] As for "propaganda," *Political Terms* and other Marxist-Leninist reference works distinguish between Communist propaganda, which is always truthful, informative, and scientifically well grounded, and imperialist propaganda of the sort churned out by what Andrei Gromyko called "the US propaganda machine"—a thoroughly dishonest and cynical propaganda that slanders progressive governments the world over.[39]

In fulminating against Western propaganda, Stalin used to wrap the word in ironic quotation marks. But in addition to this kind of indicator, Communist speech and writing often contain syntactic clues as to whether an ambivalent term is being used in a positive or a negative way. Most common of these clues is the attachment to the term of either an approbatory or a censorious adjective. "Genuine," "true," "real," "socialist," "Soviet," "progressive," "proletarian," and "democratic" on the positive side and "false," "formal," "phony," "reactionary," and "bourgeois" on the negative are the adjectives most frequently employed in this manner. To distinguish good and bad types of democracy, for example, a Communist will often speak of proletarian or socialist democracy—"government of the workers, by the workers, and for the workers," as Fidel Castro has characterized it—as opposed to bourgeois or formal democracy—"government of the bourgeoisie, by the bourgeoisie, and for the bourgeoisie."[40] The former type of democracy is substantive and progressive in its creation of real equality for the working classes, while the latter type, except during popular-front periods, is merely procedural and decidedly reactionary in its preservation of the rule and privileges of a propertied minority. Or, to take other examples, a Communist distinguishes between genuine freedom and false freedom; progressive forms of nationalism and reactionary forms; revolutionary or socialist legality (*sotsialisticheskoy zakonnosti*) and bourgeois legality; the democratic patriotism of the progressive classes and the chauvinistic "hoorah-patriotism" of the petit bourgeoisie.

Why the need for ambivalent words? Why not simply give each of them either a positive or a negative sense and transfer the antithetical sense to an entirely different term, perhaps minted for the purpose? If, for instance, socialist democracy really is a "new type" of democracy, then instead of drawing labored distinctions between that and the old bourgeois type, why not give the new type a new name and avoid confusion? The answer is that confusion is precisely what Communists hope to breed by retaining these terms. Precisely because democracy—whatever that may be—is almost everywhere regarded as a good thing, Communists must proclaim themselves devoted democrats and induce the rest of the world to consider them as such, at the same time asserting vigorously that they and they alone are the true democrats and their bourgeois enemies merely bogus ones. Call an objectionable new thing—in this case, Communist dictatorship—by the same name as something older and more desirable—liberal or egalitarian democracy—and people may make the mistake of thinking the new thing as desirable as the old.[41] Thus the retention of "democracy," now befuddlingly ambivalent to the uninitiated, a familiar word used in an unfamiliar way.

In spite of spreading confusion, at times the Party has shown disarming candor about its efforts to corrupt the terminology of politics by introducing ambivalences, and never more so than in the 1930s when it sought to form a united front with Western democratic parties and governments against fascism. Speaker after speaker at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935, for example, urged that the Party shun "sectarian language" and "find a *common language* with the broadest masses for the purpose of struggling against the class enemy." Of course, the old bourgeois slogans of peace, freedom, and democracy, everyone conceded, would first "have to be filled with new revolutionary meaning."[42] More recently, Georg Klaus has commented, with a strong hint that his comment can apply to the Communist party, that political movements often find it advantageous to adopt certain traditional key words of politics while changing their meanings.[43]

All of this suggests that conscious design and political expediency rather than etymological accident lie behind the corruption of terminology. But more often than not, Communist theoreticians have treated the corruption that creates ambivalence as some sort of natural linguistic process that individuals and parties are powerless to prevent. They even offer sophisticated scholarly explanations for the process. In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1930), for example, V. N. Voloshinov, who propounded a dialectical-materialist

interpretation of ambivalence, argued that the content of no political term is fixed forever:

> In actual fact, each living ideological sign has two faces, like Janus. Any current curse word can become a word of praise, any current truth must inevitably sound to many other people as the greatest lie. This *inner dialectic quality* of the sign comes out fully in the open only in times of social crises or revolutionary changes. In the ordinary conditions of life, the contradiction embedded in every ideological sign cannot emerge fully because the ideological sign in an established dominant ideology is always somewhat reactionary and tries, as it were, to stabilize the preceding factor in the dialectical flux of the social generative process, so accentuating yesterday's truth as to make it appear today's.[44]

The concept behind a term, it seems, bears within itself its opposite; in time the concept and its contradiction may come to clash, producing ambivalence—the phenomenon Lasswell has called symbol splitting.[45]

This theory certainly has much to commend it, as one might conclude from reading Freud's essay on the antithetical meaning of primal words.[46] But even if it is a scientifically sound explanation for ambivalence, is it accurate to insist, as do orthodox Communists, that the whole of Marxist-Leninist semantics—from constricted definitions to Manichaean vocabulary—is somehow more rigorous or scientific than non-Marxist-Leninist semantics? "The bourgeois dictionaries of politics," scoffed Wilhelm Schmidt, an East German linguist, "contain hardly any precise definitions but are satisfied with inexact descriptions of the ideas, for the bourgeoisie is interested in the concealment of the power relations in the capitalist society and the ideology developed by them serves this aim."[47] Properly understood, the precision and narrowness of Marxist-Leninist definitions, unlike the bewildering array of meanings for many of the terms in Western dictionaries, are not a deception but simply the exactitude and clarity one expects from a scientific and "historically concrete" semantics.

But if Communist semantics is scientific, how does one account for emotion-laden, judgmental statements like the following definition of Trotskyism: "a petty-bourgeois opportunist movement hostile to Marxism-Leninism, which arose in the early 20th century and was named after Trotsky, who engaged in revolutionary phrasemongering while actually preaching capitulating views on all basic questions

of the revolutionary struggle"?[48] A Marxist-Leninist like Schmidt undoubtedly would answer that all definitions, even those based on "bourgeois objectivism," are ultimately derived from an ideological view of the world. To arrive at a set of correct definitions is merely a matter of determining which ideology accurately describes the world. It so happens that this ideology is Marxism-Leninism, and since it is committed not only to describing but to changing the world, its definitions must make value judgments about institutions, policies, systems of governance, and social relationships. And in many cases these definitions will have to be highly charged emotionally; emotions, after all, are what move the masses, and it is the masses who make History. The language of Marxism-Leninism, Georg Klaus observed, "would be ineffective if it . . . were *only* to admit reference to the logically designative character of words and did not take into consideration the emotional and mass psychological factors."[49] But its definitions are nonetheless scientific for taking these factors into consideration.

And yet, for all the pretensions to scientific scrupulousness, this "dialectical" semantics looks suspiciously like an extended exercise in argument by definition; and the argument is supposed to prove nothing less than the absolute validity of Communist ideology. That is to say, the theoreticians of Marxism-Leninism have assembled an interlocking semantic system whose components are stipulative definitions, the principal function of which is not to relate a variety of experiences and viewpoints but to affirm a Party line or an ideological orthodoxy. Just as the tenets of a rigid ideology form integrated parts of a rational whole, so the definitions in Communist semantics fit together in a coherent and logical fashion, each definition contributing in its way to confirm the truth of the others and of an entire system that supposedly depicts the world as it really is.

The definition of war that appears in *Political Terms* illustrates the ideological connectedness of meanings in Communist discourse: ". . . Armed struggle between states or between social classes (civil war). There are just and unjust wars. Just wars are fought to repel aggression, to win freedom from exploitation. . . . Unjust wars are waged to perpetuate the domination of the exploiting classes and to enrich them through enslaving other countries and peoples."[50] From this definition and its use of the terms "aggression" and "exploitation," one can deduce that Communist nations never wage unjust wars. How does one know this? Because numerous Communist dictionaries, and implicitly the entry under "aggression" in *Political Terms*, say that Communist nations are not capable of committing aggression;

and because the entry under "exploitation" states that exploitation—the root cause of an unjust war—can occur only in a system founded upon private ownership of the means of production.[51] The various definitions, then, complement one another perfectly; and it becomes clear, at least to anyone who accepts the assumptions of Marxist-Leninist ideology, that Communist nations pose no threat at all to world peace. "This cannot possibly be so," a Chinese Communist general protested before the United Nations General Assembly after some of its delegates accused his country of committing aggression in Korea, "because my government is, by definition, a peace-loving nation."[52]

To take another illustration, suppose one wished to ascertain the meaning of "crisis." Looking it up in *Political Terms*, one would find that "an economic crisis is a sharp fall in the output of goods caused by their overproduction and a decrease in the effective demand for them, which leads to mass unemployment and a rapid decline in the standard of living of working people." To clarify the definition, one might check the entry under "unemployment": "a characteristic feature of the capitalist system." Not a characteristic feature of socialism, however, for the entry under "socialism" states that this system, with its rational and public planning of production and distribution, "puts an end to economic crises, unemployment and poverty."[53] Collectively these definitions provide yet another affirmation of the superiority of communism to capitalism.

Against a Communist well versed in stipulative definition, a non-Communist "bourgeois" will argue in utter futility. For the deck is stacked and the dice are loaded against him: his opponent can prove to him out of the appropriate dictionaries that capitalist but not socialist nations are innately militaristic; that all blame for the arms race rests with the West; that "imperialism" contains the seeds of its own destruction; and that socialism will everywhere inevitably replace capitalism. Moreover, the Communist and the non-Communist can resolve their differences on these matters only with great difficulty. The problem is not only their ideological antagonism but, related to that, their disagreement over what certain words mean. Until they can concur on the meanings and referents of key words like "freedom," "self-determination," and "aggression," they will be talking past each other. And to ask them to agree on these meanings would be as much as to ask one or both of them to abandon their views of the world.

Methods of Logocide

The advent of communism—so say its votaries—inaugurates a new epoch for humanity. Certainly Communist parties have attempted whenever and wherever they come to power to wipe the political and social slate clean and begin again at Year One. In country after country where they have taken control, they have discarded ancient customs, effected radical changes in manners and morals and modes of thought and education, and repealed the laws or discontinued the practices of the old regime. Under relentless attack from the Party, old ideas and old ways of life lose currency; and inevitably language changes to reflect the new ideas and new ways of life the Party introduces. This process of linguistic change is partly spontaneous and partly planned and managed.

The spontaneous part of the process, which involves the fading of certain words and expressions from the collective consciousness, is a natural by-product of profound social change. When a whole way of life has disappeared, when the nobility or the bourgeoisie as a class has ceased to exist, and when, indeed, class distinctions have ostensibly been ended forever, any word that hints of hierarchy or deference is in danger of giving up its linguistic ghost. Such was the fate that befell many of the terms associated with the old order in Russia before the Revolution and in China before the ascendancy of Mao Tse-tung.

The latter country in particular illustrates vividly what happens to allegedly servile forms of address as they yield before the advancing spirit of egalitarianism. Many deferential expressions common in Chinese society before the Communist takeover, such as *bi chu* (my humble place) and *ling tang* (your honorable mother), have come to be regarded as "nonsensical" and have given place to expressions lacking the politeness and civility implied in the older terms. In place of *ling zun* (your honorable father), for instance, the Chinese would now more probably employ simply *nide fuqin* (your father). Gone too are words suggestive of unequal sexual and social relationships, such as *nuziwucai bianshi de* (a woman is virtuous when she is incapable) and *yongren* (servant). *Zhuliyuan* (person who assists) has replaced the latter term, while *tongzhi* (comrade) has submerged *tongliao* (colleague) and *tongzong* (having the same ancestor). Not surprisingly in a nation or regime which reverses ancient values by according vastly more importance to public than to private loyalties and which exalts the collective mass above the patriarchal family, it is no longer considered proper to use *xiaojing fumu* (to show respect and filial piety

to one's parents) or *duipengyou jiangyiqi* (to show loyalty to friends). Names for discredited traditional practices and bourgeois institutions and attitudes also seem to have passed out of the active vocabulary of many Chinese by the early 1970s. Seldom would anyone speak of a *jinu* (prostitute) or *dangpu* (pawnshop), since in theory one would never encounter either in a Communist society. Nor does anyone *zhao gongzuo* or look for jobs; socialism eliminates unemployment for all time. As for *youyu* (melancholy), *xiansan* (easy and graceful), and *wanshang* (to enjoy), these words describe frivolous "bourgeois" emotions and nonpolitical attitudes, and accordingly during Mao's tenure they dropped out of Chinese usage.[54]

Much as the coming of communism may have hastened the demise of these traditional Chinese expressions, their death was still in some sense natural rather than the result of foul play. That is, they were not victims of outright logocide; neither by decree nor by silently dropping them from dictionaries have Communist regimes arranged to kill these terms. For the most part they have died because society no longer needed them. On the other hand, as in Nazi Germany, many terms in Communist countries have in fact fallen victim to a sort of premeditated murder.

One method of murdering a word, as Goebbels's *Sprachregelungen* demonstrated, is simply to forbid its ever being used. Undoubtedly this method works better with unfamiliar official terminology and propaganda catchwords than with words long since settled into the vernacular. Shortly after the Bolsheviks did away with the czarist term *ministr*, they abolished *posol* (ambassador) and *posol'stvo* (embassy); and in the levelling enthusiasm of its early days the Soviet regime also abandoned the old names for the Russian military ranks. For various reasons, such as problems of diplomatic protocol or the need for greater discipline and hierarchy in the armed services, the regime eventually resurrected many of these terms.[55] Also resurrected in 1941 after a hasty interment two years earlier at the time of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact was the word "fascist." At precisely the same time—immediately following Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union—"imperialism" was quietly and temporarily laid to rest, not to be dug up and called to life again until the disintegration of the Grand Alliance with imperialist Britain and America four years afterward.[56]

Another method of murdering a word, used also by the Nazis, is to delete it from dictionaries. Under Communist governments this is a common occurrence. Careful studies of several editions of the East German *Duden*, for instance, have shown that this important lexicon tends to exclude several classes of words generally retained in its

counterpart published in the Federal Republic. The names of numerous West German political institutions, for example, are not in the 1960 edition of the East German *Duden*, and neither are words that call attention to the political division of Germany at that time, including *Ostdeutschland* (East Germany) and *Sowyetzone* (Soviet zone). Nor are many of the words often associated with the Third Reich, such as *Rassenbiologie* (racial biology) and *Luftwaffe*. Many words describing the capitalist system, such as *Marktwirtschaft* (market economy) and *Arbeitslosenversicherung* (unemployment insurance) also were omitted, presumably because a capitalist system no longer existed in the eastern part of Germany and because socialism solves for all time the unemployment problem. And a people who have outgrown primitive superstition and proclaimed themselves an atheist nation have small need of religious terminology—wherefore the exclusion from East German dictionaries of such spiritual expressions as *Gottesfurcht* (fear of God), *Gottessohn* (Son of God), *Sünde* (sin), and *Sündenfall* (the Fall).[57]

A third method of logocide merits mention. This method, strange to say, is orthographic reform; and in some ways it is the most subtle and potentially the most effective of all specific forms of thought control. One might assume that simplifying an alphabet or a complex system of characters could only encourage rational thinking and, by promoting greater literacy, broaden the boundaries of consciousness. But at least in the case of Chinese Communist orthography, this is not necessarily so. Within a fortnight after the Party captured power in 1949, the new government created an Association for Language Reform, subsequently renamed the Research Committee on Language Reform (1952), and yet later (1954) the Committee on Language Reform. For fifteen years the committee weighed proposals and experimented with various schemes for character simplification and new alphabets to replace the old ideogrammatic symbols. Gradually new forms of script were introduced—with only limited success, however—and in addition hundreds of Chinese characters were eliminated or simplified, with the average number of strokes per character falling at one point from sixteen to eight. But there was more to this reform than the simplification of cumbersome characters and the adoption of new alphabets. "We are in the age of speed," explained one of the leaders of reform. "We must move quickly in order to reach socialism."[58]

"Reaching socialism" seems to have meant breaking abruptly with the past, and it was apparently no coincidence that all of the publications issued in the new script—in which a rudimentary Newspeak-

style vocabulary of one thousand words was developed—were propaganda texts such as the writings of Chairman Mao. The Chinese classics, and to some extent all the ancient modes of thought they embody and inculcate, would therefore be inaccessible to peasants who could read only the new script.[59] Paradoxically, levels of literacy might rise, but over time people's consciousness of the past and of non-Communist ideas might actually recede.

Indeed, it is difficult not to believe that the primary purpose of logocide, regardless of what form it takes, is to support the Party's assault on history and thought. To abolish a word is to abolish a piece of the past, to chisel out a chunk of humanity's collective memory and consciousness. Evidently this is what Communist parties are attempting to do when they ban a word or cut it out of a dictionary, or when they engage in systematic orthographic reform. For all their insistence that they are raising and refining consciousness, it seems that in getting rid of words and simplifying characters they are trying to straiten thought by forcing it to flow through the approved and narrowly orthodox channels.

New Words for Old

Spokesmen for communism are understandably sensitive to charges by Western critics that they use language in a manipulative manner. Censuring Orwell for having presented in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* an "absolutely falsifying picture" of Communist society, Georg Klaus, for instance, objected to Orwell's description of a thought-destroying language. The working class, Klaus protested—and by working class he really meant the Communist party—would never permit such a language as Newspeak to arise: "It is not interested in a curtailment of language, but rather combats it to the utmost. While bourgeois agitation itself takes pains to eliminate words from language usage or to make them 'socially unfit' to describe circumstances that are unpleasant to the bourgeoisie, but the existence of which cannot be denied, socialist agitation will extend this process only to words that are the expression of inhumanity, exploitation, war preparation, etc."[60]

In all probability this apology for Communist logocide and semanticide is partly an act of projection, a condemning of the capitalist enemy for doing what the Party itself does by intention. Yet it is at least true that Communist language is different from Newspeak in one important particular: instead of diminishing dramatically, the vocabulary of the language in a Communist country tends to increase

significantly.[61] A number of old words fall away, of course, but Communist neologisms probably greatly exceed them in quantity. Almost overnight, the people of a newly communized nation may find themselves having to get used to such newfangled expressions as *sovetizirovat* (sovietize) and *subbotnik* (Saturday of voluntary work), *kollektivizatsiya* (collectivization) and *raskulachivat* (dekulakize), *detsad* (a contraction of *detskiy sad* or kindergarten) and *agitprop* (a contraction of the Russian words for agitation and propaganda). So large is the number of neologisms in a country like the Soviet Union, and so unusual the style of their construction—many of them are contractions or abbreviations of several larger words—that some observers have claimed that a Communist revolution creates in effect a new language, one markedly different from what was spoken and written under the old regime.[62]

But exactly in what sense is the new language new? What sets it apart from prerevolutionary modes of expression? To some extent, surely, the newness consists in the novel terminology and the swollen vocabulary. But even more than this, what is different about Communist language is the exceedingly confined view of the world that the new vocabulary conveys. Naturally this is the worldview of Marxism-Leninism, the attitudes and dogmas of which find precise expression in the new words. In the German Democratic Republic, for example, many of the terms introduced by the government have represented the rigidly regimentarian outlook of the Socialist Unity party. Such was the case with the numerous compounds formed from *Plan*, *kollektiv*, *Brigade*, and *Produktion*. The profusion of words like *Fünfjahresplan* (Five-Year Plan), *Fußballkollektiv* (football collective), *Jugendbrigade* (Youth Brigade), and *Produktionsroman* (production novel) not only reflected the pervasive process of collectivization in East Germany but presumably helped to condition East Germans to accept the process and to conceive of themselves as self-sacrificing parts of a totalitarian socialist whole. Moreover, the extensive use of words like *Friedenspolitik* (peace policy) and *Volksdemokratie* (people's democracy), as well as the many other compounds put together out of ideological catchwords such as *Friede* and *Volk*, was doubtless intended to help the masses think in harmony with the Party line.

What all of this appears to signify is that even though Communist parties have failed to follow Big Brother's example and bring about a net reduction in vocabulary, they have been true to the spirit of Newspeak in that they use vocabulary in an effort to impose on people an outlook or frame of mind totally in accord with official ideology. To

put it another way, Communist parties use language in an effort to contract and control thought. Far from expanding people's breadth of vision by exposing them to a large number of sometimes conflicting ideas and points of view, the new words are supposed to sell them on a single severely limited point of view and to preclude essential knowledge of all others. But it is not just the new words that are supposed to do this. It is the new words and the old words redefined and the elimination of undesirable words, all working together over time to develop in members of a captive audience what Marx called a Communist consciousness.

Obviously Communists would never admit that by thus revising or "rectifying" language they are attempting to control people's minds in some nefarious fashion. What they do say, though, is that they are "raising the political and ideological level of the whole population according to plan."[63] To have a Communist consciousness, they insist, is to have a heightened consciousness; and for attaining such a state of mind, the "homogeneous" language they have created in their passion for what Mao Tse-tung called "unity in thinking," and which they claim is superior to bourgeois language with its confusing heterogeneity, is an indispensable instrument.[64] But to many persons who regard the process of "rectification" from a position outside the Marxist-Leninist field of vision, the claim of heightened consciousness may seem a deception. On the contrary, as Communists like Klaus have themselves admitted, Marxist-Leninist discourse belongs to a "closed system," and the preponderance of evidence suggests that the lack of openness in Communist language is aimed at lowering consciousness by turning reality upside down.

The preceding survey of Communist language tends to confirm this view of its purpose. It is not just the outright lies it contains that produce a deliberately topsy-turvy picture of the world. It is the combination of lies, Manichaean oversimplifications, perversions of meaning, judgmental definitions, elastic terminology, and other features that account for the inverted character of Communist discourse. As an illustration, consider the following statement published in *Izvestia* during the Hungarian revolt in October 1956: "The forces of international reaction, scheming to hinder the building of new life by the Hungarian people, counted on the counterrevolutionary putsch in Hungary to return to power a corrupt clique ready to serve the American monopolies. The forces of progress brand as infamous the organizers of the antipopular venture in Hungary. The working people of the European countries of people's democracy are increasing their vigilance against enemy attempts."[65] From what is known

of Communist semantics and rhetorical techniques, as well as of the facts in the Hungarian case, one might translate this inverted prose into Oldspeak thus: "The enemies of the Soviet Union, hoping that Hungary would pull out of the Soviet orbit, counted on the revolutionary uprising in that country to set up a pro-Western government. The Communist parties and their sympathizers brand as infamous the organizers of the popular revolt in Hungary. The Communist parties of the eastern-bloc puppet dictatorships are increasing their vigilance against enemy attempts." The translation suggests that the "counter-revolutionary putsch" was actually a popular rebellion against an unpopular quisling government. But a person unacquainted with the peculiarities of Communist jargon and ignorant of the unconventional meanings assigned to words like "reaction" and "people" might get from the original passage the mistaken impression that a handful of traitors had conspired to overthrow a democratically elected government in Budapest and that the Red Army had intervened just in time to save Hungarian freedom and independence. Certainly it is fair to say that anyone who believed this impression would have had his consciousness of reality curtailed. Such is the aim of Communist discourse, in which words and reality have drifted as far apart as separate solar systems, if not separate universes—a language in which dictators can boast that life has become gayer when in truth it has grown grimmer, and in which constitutions guaranteeing civil liberties can be written and promulgated at a time when an overheard whisper of dissent and criticism could prove fatal.

If the inverted qualities of Communist discourse were not enough to demonstrate that its purpose is to lessen consciousness and control thought, one might also take note of its repetitious nature. "People for the most part . . . don't know how to *think*," Lenin observed, "they only *learn words by heart*."[66] Partly for this reason orthodox Communist discourse, even more than Nazi German, is a language made up largely of patented formulas and catchphrases ritualistically repeated and readily called to mind. Speeches and articles composed in it are often little more than an assortment of slogans, clichés, and stereotypes. As with Nazi slogans, the Communist formulas perform several important functions. First, they exhort the masses and members of the Party to strive with all their energy to attain various goals. The goal may be narrowly political: *Vsya vlast' Sovetam!*—"All power to the Soviets!" Or it may be economic in nature: *Dognat' i peregnat' kapitalisticheskiye strany*—"Overtake and surpass the capitalist countries." Second, the formulas lay down the current policy and the correct line of the Party. Politicians, writers, and all other citizens

in public situations take their cues from the latest slogans, knowing that to deviate from these formulas and from the style of language of an editorial in *Pravda* or the *People's Daily* can be to court serious trouble. (The result is that nearly everyone uses a form of prose and speech so repetitious, so lifeless, so mind-deadening that even Party leaders have been known to grumble about it.)[67] Third, the use of formula language is a kind of defense mechanism for the leadership, protecting it to some extent from challenges to its monopoly on power and wisdom. Confronted with demonstrating students and workers whose criticism of the regime they could not answer with reasoned argument, the rulers of China in June 1989 not only suppressed the demonstrators with great violence but recalled into service against them and their sympathizers in the Party the battle-tested epithets of Stalinism. "Hooligans," "thugs," "counterrevolutionary rebellion," "anti-Party clique"—the language of vilification, repeated over and over in the press and on television, virtually duplicated Khrushchev's during the Hungarian uprising, and like Khrushchev's it was intended to put an end to discussion of reform.

But the most important function of formulas is the fourth: they do away with the need for spontaneity (*stikhiinost*) and thought. One can hardly exaggerate the importance of ritual language for a Communist government (or for any other despotic regime, for that matter). As they change from parties of revolution into parties of public order and the status quo, as the social law of entropy asserts itself and the revolutionary ardor of earlier days abates and disappears, Communist parties seem to concentrate less and less on making fanatics out of the masses and more and more on merely keeping a tight lid on the political and social order. Among other things, this means checking the growth of independent thinking, which can burgeon into rebellion all too easily if not cut off at its source. Hence the reduction of public discourse to the mindless recitation of clichés and cant expressions, and the social and political penalties that can be imposed on those who depart too far from the prescribed—and generally very monotonous—forms of speech and writing.[68]

The official formulas suffuse society, not only cascading constantly from orthodox lips in a stream of slogans and catchwords but showing up on buildings and banners, street signs and tubes of toothpaste. At any given moment the use of certain words and phrases—"concrete," "herostratic," "bloody oppression of the workers," "struggle for peace"—is obligatory for Party members, even in non-Communist societies, as proof of their submission, conformity, and faith in the infallibility of the Party. Indeed, one can often easily identify an

orthodox Communist simply by his manner of expression; more than one underground Communist has gone to the gallows because his choice of words gave him away to discerning ears.[69]

But the important point is that the repetitive emphasis on formula language, which often demands of a person that he deny the evidence of his senses and the pleadings of logic, tends to discourage and even to prevent critical thought. In place of thought there may be at times little more than the numbing reverberation of slogans; where cerebration should occur, there may be only resigned acceptance of a fate the slogans proclaim as an inevitability. The poet-novelist Tibor Tardos once lamented that both his work as a propagandist and the general atmosphere of lying and sloganeering in Communist-controlled Hungary transformed him into a kind of Orwellian goodthinker: "And gradually without realising how it happened—slowly, slowly with conviction and almost proudly I started to become unaccustomed to thinking."[70] More recently, Arkady Shevchenko has recalled how his Communist upbringing conditioned him "to speak in formulas without reflection or vacillation."[71]

To speak the language of communism, then, with its inverted qualities and endless repetition—the two outstanding general features of Communist discourse—entails the renunciation of intelligence and an ability to regurgitate with little or no thought, when the need arises, the officially sanctioned phrases. And to lose oneself in the literature of the Party is to journey across a semantic landscape upon which the shadows of equivocality and ambiguity never fall, illuminated as it is by the gospel truth of Marxism-Leninism: a world where the Party is always right and its enemies are always wrong, a world in which it is not possible for a Communist nation to be an aggressor or a capitalist nation a deliverer; a world where every idea and value and issue is defined and settled and laid out in advance for the instruction and edification of the faithful. A world, in sum, where there is no need to think for oneself.

Against the evidence that Communists intentionally use language as a tool for controlling thought, one might object that at least in Marxist theory language plays but a secondary role in the building of a social order and the shaping of a socialist consciousness. Did not Marx observe that men's social being—their bond with the material base of society—and not language determines their consciousness? And what about Lenin's strictures against philosophical idealism? Did he not expend hundreds of pages proving in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* that reality is material and objective, existing not in mind or spirit but in matter? And does this not contradict the view

of the Party in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* that reality exists only within the skull, and that therefore a person's consciousness can be defined and limited through language? Why then should we give so much attention to the use of language by Communist parties when they themselves implicitly downplay its importance?

Until Joseph Stalin's pronouncement in the pages of *Pravda* in 1950 that language is independent of both the economic base and the superstructure of society, such an argument might have seemed plausible. But after Stalin described language as "an instrument of struggle and development of society," inseparable from thought and giving it a concrete material reality, it became altogether untenable.[72] The renewal of interest among Soviet psychologists and physiologists in Pavlov's "second signal system," culminating in the conference on Pavlov at the Soviet Academy of Sciences in the summer of 1953, merely reinforced Stalin's emphasis on language.[73] Even as early as 1948 the Marxist scholar L. O. Reznikow, anticipating Stalin, had captured the essence of what remains to this day standard Marxist-Leninist doctrine on the role of language: "Marxism teaches us that language reasserts itself not only as a means of communication . . . but also as a powerful tool which can be used to affect thoughts, feelings, and especially behavior, as well as, ultimately, the material reality."[74] As this chapter has demonstrated, it is a tool that Communist parties have never hesitated to employ systematically and deftly to their advantage.

Some years ago *Pravda* boasted that the Soviet Communist party "has been, is, and will be, the only master of the minds, the only expresser of the thoughts and hopes, the only leader and organizer of the people."[75] If the Party indeed is complete master, it can be so only by monopolizing the word. Even more than physical terror and the rewriting of history, the control or "rectification" of language is potentially the most powerful of all the general agencies for controlling or "rectifying" thought—all the more so because when used with finesse and ingenuity it is a form of domination the victims cannot perceive. "The tyranny exercised unconsciously on men's minds," wrote Gustave Le Bon a century ago, "is the only real tyranny, because it cannot be fought against."[76]

PART FOUR

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER TEN

NEWSPEAK AND ITS ANTECEDENTS: A COMPARISON

By a long route this inquiry into totalitarian discourse has reached its climax. I have been scrutinizing separately and in some detail the language of national socialism and of orthodox communism. But how do these two forms of totalitarian discourse compare with what I have called the Orwellian Model of Totalitarian Language? Are the three essentially alike? If so, it can be said with confidence not only that there is a language typical of the regime known as "totalitarian" but that Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* accurately portrayed the most important aspects of that language.

The Orwellian Model includes six major components: intent of the rulers to control thought and behavior through language, exaltation of the state over the individual, violence and vilification, euphemism, special political terminology, and the failure of words to reflect reality. Let me briefly consider these one by one, comparing them point for point with what is known about the historical

antecedents of Newspeak. After this it should be possible to draw some firm conclusions about Orwell's description of totalitarian language.

Intent to control thought and behavior through language. It would be a brazen ruler indeed who told his people outright that he intended to take away their freedom by taking away their ability to think for themselves. And he would be still more brazen—not to mention foolish—if he told them plainly that he was going to take away their ability to think for themselves by abusing language. Neither the National Socialists nor the Communists ever showed so high a degree of candor about why they used words the way they did. Yet they have not left us clueless to deduce their intentions. When totalitarians like Goebbels and Stalin argued that language is an instrument of struggle, there can be little doubt about the purpose for which they intended to use that instrument. The evidence presented here suggests strongly that they have used it for the reason the Orwellian Model tells us they used it: to control and even to combat thought. Even when, as in the case of the Nazis, the totalitarian party refrained from developing a linguistic theory which would explain and justify to itself what it was doing with words, its actions indicate a clear and conscious aim. Monopolizing the means of mass communication, employing words deceitfully and repetitively and packing them with emotive content, perverting their meanings or purging them from dictionaries, substituting slogans for thought—all of these practices point to a grand design of making people strictly orthodox in outlook and behavior, of confining them to the narrow mental universe called into being by party ideology and propaganda.

Did the design succeed? The evidence is mixed. To be able to say with absolute conviction that the manipulation of language in totalitarian countries has worked, it would be necessary to carry out over an extended period of time a series of scientific surveys of their populations; observers would have to measure through complex means and under carefully monitored conditions the changing attitudes and perceptions of the people as persistent indoctrination and "eternal repetition" of ideas and slogans took effect. Obviously such a study is not possible; no totalitarian government would permit it. What can be studied, however, are the attitudes and perceptions of recently arrived refugees from totalitarian nations. And here the evidence is disturbing. Interviews in the 1950s and 1960s with refugees from the Soviet Union, East Germany, and mainland China revealed that although these expatriates were generally and in some cases vehemently opposed to the government of their homeland, many of them tended to think and express themselves, often unaware that they

were doing so, in the categories and in the terminology of Marxism-Leninism or Maoism. A large number even tended to define political terms such as "socialism" and "opportunism" in the same way that Communist regimes define them. Not surprisingly, those who were educated after the Party came to power were often more apt than others to speak its language.[1]

The tendency to think and talk like orthodox Communists, even though many of these fugitives from totalitarian tyranny had never belonged to the Party, seems to have resulted from prolonged exposure to official language and indoctrination. According to one of the Chinese refugees, a perceptive university graduate who had never wholly embraced communism: "Using the pattern of words for so long, you are so accustomed to them that you feel chained. If you make a mistake, you make a mistake within the pattern. Although you don't admit that you have adopted this kind of ideology, you are actually using it subconsciously, almost automatically."[2] Apparently repeated doses of the official language, unresisted by the antidote of a rival form of public discourse, can take their toll upon thought. "To some degree or another we all, of course, believed what was dinned into us," Nadezhda Mandelstam wrote in her reminiscences of Soviet life under Stalin.[3] If even the dissident creative mind of a Mandelstam or a Solzhenitsyn is not immune to the language of totalitarian propaganda, then we must consider this language a thought-controlling force with which to reckon.

Exaltation of the state over the individual. Nazi and Communist discourse, as well as the official rhetoric of Orwell's Oceania, emphasize incessantly and in superlative terms the power and majesty of the totalitarian party and state and their leaders. By recurring on every possible occasion to words like "invincible," "fate," and "progress," which create the illusion of an irresistible force or an immovable object, the totalitarians have attempted to intimidate their enemies and awe their subjects. To those who are in fact intimidated or awed by such language, it must seem the worst sort of folly to defy the total state; one might as well swim against a tidal wave or move the proverbial mountain. But to challenge the unbeatable adversary is not simply an act of futility; it is an act of impiety as well. For by their choice of words—by referring to the Leader, for example, as a "savior and intercessor," or to the party's principles as "holy"—the Nazis and Communists, like the agents of Oceanic despotism, have made it appear that they embody Absolute Good. And by the same device they have made it equally apparent that their enemies—"satanic" and "sinful," all of them—personify Absolute Evil.

Against the great exalted monolith of the total state the individual

counts for nothing. Whether in Oceanic, Nazi, or Communist discourse, he is treated in dehumanizing terms, swallowed up in his race or class and regarded not as a unique creature but as an Aryan or a Jew, a proletarian or a bourgeois. If by chance or choice he belongs to a friendly class, he is entitled to think of himself as clay in the hands of the party's master craftsmen, the Hitlers or Stalins who will mold the promising "human material" into an ideal citizen, a Nordic Man or a New Soviet Man. If, however, he belongs to an alien group, then woe betide him: in totalitarian language he is no better than a bedbug or a sow, and accordingly he becomes a prime candidate for extermination.

Violence and vilification. By acts of studied cruelty and methodical violence the totalitarians have shown themselves to be a brutal breed, and their brutality betrays itself in language remarkable for its fierceness and militance. In this particular there is little practical difference between Nazi and Communist language, although the Nazis were undoubtedly more outspoken than Communists in glorifying violence and proclaiming an eternal necessity for it. Admittedly there are times, most notably during "peace offensives," when the totalitarian party tempers its rhetoric and puts up a front of moderation and reason. But mostly this camouflage or Aesopian language is designed for foreign consumption and deception. The rhetoric tailored to domestic political goals, such as mobilization of the masses for military or economic enterprises, usually continues in its vehement strains. And one suspects that even if it lacked political utility, the totalitarians would be driven by some inner compulsion to talk the language of brutality. Well might they cry, with Shakespeare's Coriolanus,

> *Desire not*
> *T'allay my rages and revenges with*
> *Your colder reasons*[4]

for the bloodthirst and savagery so evident in their language seem to spring from deeply felt hatreds and abiding grievances that have to be vented regardless of the consequences.

And vent them they do, against an awesome array of villains and scoundrels who occupy a central place in the language and themes of totalitarian propaganda. Like Emmanuel Goldstein and the East Asian (or is it Eurasian?) soldiers in Orwell's novel, the Jew, the plutocrat, the *Yanqui* imperialist, and the party turncoat appear again and again in Nazi and Communist tirades, each playing his indispensable role in rallying the people behind the regime and keeping the totali-

tarian society in a state of high tension. A well-developed Manichaean vocabulary, loaded with what Richard Weaver called god-terms and devil-terms, and including an elastic terminology which collapses all enemies of the party into a single comprehensive category, facilitates the task of stirring up violent hatred against these figures and of reducing all political conflict to the white-and-black opposition of good and evil.

Euphemism. Although by no means unique to totalitarian language, the euphemistic expression has been as essential an element in Nazi German and Communist discourse as it is in the language of Oceanic despotism. In a world where to some extent the masses still live by traditional moral codes that condemn murder and treachery, and where the party in spite of its carefully cultivated propaganda image is neither infallible nor invincible, euphemisms perform such vital functions as concealing acts of terrorism and masking military defeats.

In general, Communists have displayed more imagination and skill in their use of euphemism than did the Nazis. Perhaps this is because the Marxist-Leninist ideology, with its high-sounding phraseology of science, progress, rationality, and classless equality, is itself a sort of macroeuphemism that carries tremendous appeal and considerable power for delusion. By contrast the Nazi language and *Weltanschauung* had too much the flavor of Social Darwinism, too much the imagery of domination and bloodlust, deliberately glorified as a permanent way of life, to carry comparable appeal and power. In the end the failure of the Nazis to adopt the language of reason and universal brotherhood may have aided in their undoing. Instead of dwelling upon brutality and eternal struggle, which for most people have only limited allurement, they ought, like their Communist counterparts, to have dwelt interminably upon peace, freedom, and equality, which do have a proven and perennial appeal. But then they would have been something other than Nazis.

Special political terminology. While Orwell's fictional Party divides Newspeak into three distinct vocabularies—one for everyday business, one for politics, and one for science and technology—historical totalitarianism has made no similar attempt to classify and partition the terms of its own language. On the other hand, both Nazis and Communists have developed a sophisticated lexicon of politics which bears much resemblance to Newspeak B and the political jargon of Oceania's Party. As with Newspeak, the Nazi and Communist languages include many words with rigid definitions that reflect and convey the worldview of the totalistic regime. Some of these words,

especially the names of government institutions and party organizations, are neologisms conceived by party propagandists, but many others are simply old catchwords redefined and corrupted, such as "democracy" and "socialism." Like the words of Newspeak B, moreover, a good number of these Nazi and Communist terms, which have come to acquire an almost incantatory power over many people, are intended to evoke frenzied emotional responses rather than sober cerebration.

In spite of these similarities, however, the vocabulary of historical totalitarianism has differed in several important respects from that of Newspeak. First, while Oceanic philologists have given fixed and supposedly final definitions to Newspeak words, the historical totalitarians, and in particular the Communists, have found it either impossible or inexpedient to freeze the content of political terms. The checkered realities of power politics preclude their doing so. As party lines change, the meanings of words like "aggression" and "freedom" may need to be changed as well, and to be inflexible in defining them could therefore prove counterproductive. Indeed, it is doubtful whether in practice even the Oceanic regime could freeze definitions. Controlling the formal definitions of words by publishing a "definitive" edition of a dictionary cannot, after all, arrest the process of informally defining and redefining them. If in Newspeak a person can say "This dog is free from lice," he can also say, because his experience of oppression leads him through analogy to such a conclusion, that "I want to be free from Big Brother." Thus through metaphorical extension—being ruled by Big Brother is akin to being plagued by lice—he could begin to recover something of the officially discarded and liberal sense of the word "free."

A second significant difference between the vocabulary of Newspeak and the vocabulary of its Nazi and Communist antecedents is that the latter, unlike the former, has tended to grow larger instead of smaller. Although in fits of logocidal fury the totalitarians have indeed purged from the dictionaries or banned from the press a host of unagreeable words, on balance they seem to have added far more words to the language than they have subtracted from it. This trend will doubtless continue as long as the total state must compete against technologically sophisticated democracies with highly literate populations. It appears, therefore, that Orwell's idea of abridging vocabulary derives not from empirical observation but from logical deduction: if a government wished to narrow the range of consciousness and if political realities permitted it to use all means at its disposal for doing so, then it would set about shrinking vocabulary. It is a shrewd

conjecture, inspired no doubt by Basic English and the creation of various artificial and synthetic languages with miniscule vocabularies, but no totalitarian state has yet attempted to carry its linguistic reforms to such an extreme. However, certain passages in the literature of totalitarianism, such as Hitler's statement in *Mein Kampf* that pictures make better propaganda than books and articles because they demand less thought, may suggest that totalitarian dictators would at least like to dispense with as many words as possible.[5]

Newspeak differs from the Nazi and Communist languages in one other important particular. Whereas the Oceanic regime has designed Newspeak exclusively for use by Party members, with the non-Party masses continuing to think and talk in Oldspeak, the Nazis and Communists have always aimed their language at least as much at the masses as at intellectuals and party members. They could hardly do otherwise, inasmuch as both parties have seen themselves as leaders of mass movements. Ignoring the multitude or allowing it to wallow in apathy toward things political may have a place in the Oceanic scheme of things, but no historical totalitarian party has ever dared to take the masses so lightly. On the contrary, the Nazis and Communists have unfailingly sought to arouse them in active support of party goals and projects. "I can lead the masses," said Hitler, "only if I tear them out of their apathy. Only the fanatic mass can be swayed."[6] And to sway them he relied largely upon propaganda and an incendiary language directed far less toward the enlightened few than the unlettered many. For Communist regimes it has been much the same, with the theoretical Marxist-Leninist distinction between "agitation"—simplistic political language designed for mass consumption—and "propaganda"—a more complex form of political persuasion designed for intellectuals—often breaking down in practice. Thus Mao Tse-tung predicted that Party intellectuals, workers, and peasants in China eventually would speak "the same language, not only the common language of patriotism and the common language of the socialist system, but probably even the common language of the communist world outlook."[7]

Thus Orwell's vision of a totalitarian future in which the governed and their governors speak different languages and have little contact with each other has no parallel in the totalitarian past and present. Why then did Orwell draw a picture seemingly at variance with the historical record? Two explanations come to mind. One is that he intended the linguistic gulf between the Party and the proles in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* as a description not of what has been but of what might be. That is to say, he may have foreseen that in totalitarian

states the mass fanaticism so valued by the Lenins and Hitlers might someday spend itself, even as the rulers continued to spout slogans about mass revolutionary fervor and to hold fast their grip on the populace. The result of such a development, which seems to have occurred in the Soviet Union and its satellite states long before the end of the Brezhnev era, would be mass indifference toward politics and an increasing remoteness of the regime and its language from the thoughts and needs of the people. (Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* and *perestroika* is intended at least in part as a corrective response to this very problem.)[8] Of this indifference and remoteness the fission of language between the Party and the proles in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is arguably a literary symbol.

A second possibility is that Orwell's description of a linguistically divided Oceania is actually a statement about class-divided Britain. The two classes Orwell had in mind, however, were not the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but the intelligentsia and the common people. In his commentaries on politics and society he often contrasted the English common man's decency and patriotism with what he considered to be the moral relativism and power-worshiping Russophilia of the alienated English intellectual. This is not the only point of contrast, however, for Orwell also saw a great deal of difference in the language used by the educated person and the common man. The intellectual, he wrote in "Propaganda and Demotic Speech," often despises the plain language of the worker, while the worker is often unable to comprehend the sometimes turgid language of the intellectual and the public official.[9] Perhaps the linguistic cleavage between the Party and the proles in Oceania reflects Orwell's fear that an Anglo-American totalitarianism might accentuate the language differences between the common people and intellectuals as a way of keeping the common people in their place. In Orwell's imaginative worst of all worlds, linguistic division and a steady diet of *prolefeed* might foster political apathy and forever deprive the masses of a social consciousness.

Failure of words to reflect reality. The wide gap between rhetoric and reality in all forms of totalitarian discourse cannot be denied. The total state has need of suppressing truth and information, and to do this it relies in part upon an upside-down language, a kind of Potemkin village of rhetoric that presents an altogether false appearance. But contrary to what Orwell's portrayal of language in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* might lead us to believe, the dichotomy of word and fact—a consequence of the so-called vacuum effect described by Friedrich and Brzezinski[10]—may completely fail to deceive people.

What it may succeed in doing instead is to sow seeds of cynicism in the populace: the ordinary citizen grows skeptical of the regime's words when he sees they are so often ill-matched with reality. He will perhaps swallow the distorted accounts of life in other countries, for he has seen nothing of those places and therefore has no compelling reason to question the stories he hears of widespread poverty in America or the influence of Jewish financiers in the banks of London and New York. But the realities of life in his own country, or what Jacques Ellul has called "local facts," are quite another matter. These he knows firsthand, and his experience of them may directly contradict what the regime tells him. The hard-pressed Soviet proletarian will hold in silent ridicule the official who boasts that life in the socialist fatherland has become happier. The foreman of a German factory who supervised conscripted workers from captured eastern territories may have come to reject the Nazi stereotype of the Slavic *Untermensch*.[11] In short, the regime says one thing; reality, which for a variety of reasons the regime can never entirely control, says another; and average people in a position to compare the words with the reality cease believing the words. As a result the words lose their power to persuade.

The futility of using language to conceal a reality of which many in the general population are aware is apparent from the ineffectiveness of Nazi euphemisms. At one time during the war, *Sonderbehandlung* (special treatment) was a code word for mass murder in the SS lexicon. But the hidden meaning of this term became obvious to too many people, so that by the spring of 1943 Himmler had to issue orders that different expressions be employed in describing the "reduction" of European Jewry.[12] The euphemism had become a dysphemism, which meant that new euphemisms had to be minted; and these in their turn presumably came to acquire all the horrific connotations of the word they replaced. That which we call murder is as abominable by any other name. (The metamorphosis of euphemism into dysphemism, by the way, is a common and natural occurrence. That fact alone would make it imprudent for the Party of Oceania to include euphemisms like *joycamp* in the final edition of its Newspeak dictionary.)

The euphemisms for military defeat were equally ineffective in cloaking reality. Too many grim tales from returning soldiers and too many Allied bombing raids close to home made it impossible to cover up the catastrophes that followed El Alamein and Stalingrad in an almost unbroken train. The frustration of Nazi propagandists at their inability to shape public perceptions of the war through euphemistic

phraseology is strikingly illustrated by an entry in Joseph Goebbels's diary dated 20 September 1943: "The Japanese are now speaking of a successful evacuation of Salamaua. These 'successful evacuations' are getting the upper hand with the Axis. I don't believe we shall be able to use the expression much longer; it is making us more and more of a laughing stock. The Axis Powers in the course of one year have done so much successful evacuating that a large part of their former war potential was lost thereby. We must begin at last to give a clear picture to our peoples and the world about our situation and our methods in this war."[13]

As this passage proves, no one was more acutely conscious than Goebbels of the problems created by the dichotomy of fact and word. For propaganda to succeed, he stated more than once, it must not contradict but confirm the facts. At the beginning of the war he observed smugly that the facts "speak without exception for us"[14]—that is, Germany was scoring victory after victory on the battlefield, and victories made boastful words believable. By war's end, however, with the *Wehrmacht* in continual retreat, Goebbels was longing for like successes, without which rumors and Allied propaganda were having far greater impact on the German public than his own sometimes overly optimistic accounts of the conflict. Lacking truth and realism, German propaganda had to depend more and more upon the support of "a sharp sword": force and terror.[15] A notable exception was Goebbels's anti-Bolshevik propaganda, readily believed by most of the public because it had considerable foundation in fact.[16]

The unreality of its language, then, threatens to undermine the credibility and thus to some extent the power of the totalist regime. The only remedy would be to inject heavy doses of factuality into official language. But facts administered in the wrong measure could be even more damaging; too much truth might explode some indispensable propaganda myths. And in any case the kind of rhetorical restraint that truth demands is something the totalitarians seem constitutionally incapable of practicing. For even if no need existed for euphemism, they would still be driven by their intemperance to talk a steady stream of superlatives, their words again and again outracing reality and exhausting themselves through abuse and overuse.

The Nazi "fanatical" was one such spent word. From a synonym for zealous or passionate, taken as descriptive of the most loyal National Socialists, this fashionable catchword ran a relentless course of devaluation through repetition and trivialization. Thus a Nazi biographer of Hermann Goering somewhat ludicrously described the air marshal as a "fanatical friend of animals." As the term and its deriva-

tives lost their cutting edge, it became necessary to sharpen them with modifiers, so that Goebbels, for instance, could speak in all seriousness of "wild fanaticism," a phrase which would have sounded obviously redundant in an earlier day.[17] The list of terms debased in this manner by Nazis and Communists could go on almost without end. "Great," "heroic," "resolute," "firm," "genuine," "humane"—the number of adjectives alone would be astonishing. All have been contaminated and rendered rhetorically almost worthless. It was of words like these that Orwell was probably thinking when he wrote in "Politics and the English Language": "I should expect to find . . . that the German, Russian and Italian languages have all deteriorated in the last ten or fifteen years, as a result of dictatorship."[18]

He was well within the mark. And no less an authority than Mikhail Gorbachev would agree, however begrudgingly, with Orwell's assessment. Again and again the general secretary and president has warned that "empty phraseology and inability to speak the language of truth" have tended to discredit the Soviet regime in the eyes of its people and that the Communist party must therefore strive to realize "unity of word and deed."[19] What this amounts to is a remarkable admission that the totalitarian command state has performed with far less efficiency and success than its votaries once confidently predicted. "One cannot achieve much by injunction," Gorbachev has conceded,[20] which suggests that for its economic and social projects to succeed, the regime must rely more upon persuasion than coercion. But how does it persuade the masses if its words carry no credibility? Thus Gorbachev's concern that words and deeds should closely correlate, and his apparently sincere assurance that "we are waging a determined struggle for such correlation."[21] But his use of a cliché in attacking the use of clichés is not an especially auspicious way to begin the struggle.

The failure of totalitarian language to fit reality has produced two important consequences clearly unwelcome to the dictators. The first is an attitude of skepticism and cynicism among many of their subjects. This attitude is best summarized in the admonition of an East German writer who defected to the West: "Don't watch your leaders' lips, watch their hands."[22] And it is well illustrated by the reaction of a Soviet expatriate dissident who appraised an early outline of this chapter. On reading the sentence "Communist language tends to falsify reality," he became agitated. "Why do you use this word?" he demanded to know. "*They* use this word." "They," of course, were the Soviet authorities, and the offending word was "falsify." To his mind, accustomed to the upside-down language of Communist

propaganda in which he disbelieved almost by habit, the sentence carried the meaning "Communist language tends to tell the truth about reality"—something his experience and perception told him was not the case.

A second consequence of the word-fact dichotomy has been the creation of what may be called counterlanguages. As opposed to official language, a counterlanguage is any form of private communication—oral, written, or otherwise—that attempts to penetrate the wall of lies erected by totalitarian propaganda, break the regime's monopoly on words, and state the truth about the world as the private oppressed citizen sees it. Truth, it seems, clamors for a hearing; and if it finds no public forums, it takes refuge underground. In conversations with trusted friends behind closed doors, in sign language devised by family members who suspect the secret police have bugged their apartment, in a manuscript or on a tape recording passed around from person to person, nonconforming citizens counter the deceptions of government by setting forth "the facts" in contrast to official falsehood.[23]

The difference in style and tone between official language and counterlanguage can be startling. Official language fairly bursts with clichés and stereotypes; counterlanguage abhors patented formulas. Official language, relying heavily on affected emotion and mechanical repetition, is stilted in the extreme; by contrast the most sophisticated counterlanguages can be quite lively, putting across with irony, puns, proverbs, sarcasm, subtle suggestion, and humor their message of dissent and defiance.[24] And while party language teems with lofty abstractions and glittering superlatives that bear little relation to the real world, the most convincing counterlanguage will be referential. That is, it will draw its listeners and readers away from ideological generalities by pointing them toward the "concrete realities" of life in a dictatorship. The great strength of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, for instance, is that it sticks doggedly to particulars—an all-night interrogation beneath a blinding electric light, a cattle car stuffed with suffocating prisoners, a jail cell without a latrine bucket—in order to expose a corrupt regime and puncture its pretentious language. For this reason it has the ring of truth, something seldom attained (at least until quite recently) in official Soviet writing. As a rule, the more particulars it contains and the harder it rubs the reader's nose against the gritty surfaces of totalitarian reality, the more credible a counterlanguage will be.

That Solzhenitsyn was once a denizen of the Gulag is no coincidence. For it is the victims of totalitarian repression who have pro-

duced by far the most believable and interesting counterlanguages: provided they survive to tell about it, those who have seen and suffered the worst will have the fewest illusions and the most accurate language. The Holocaust, for instance, gave rise to many Yiddish expressions—"death wall," "death bridge," "death waltz"—that attempt to tell in the starkest terms the morbid tale of the Final Solution.[25] These give a far more faithful impression than the one that SS euphemisms were supposed to convey.

Even more remarkable than this Yiddish counterlanguage is the counterlanguage of the *zeks*, the prisoners in Soviet forced-labor camps.[26] From what we know of it, theirs is a colorful jargon, full of earthy expressions for the unpleasant and often lethal realities of camp life. In zek slang, for example, to give in under interrogation is to break like a hymen. To be fingerprinted is to play the piano. To be tortured by having a needle forced under one's fingernail is to have a manicure. To be shot is to get nine grams (the weight of a bullet). Aside from these and the many derogatory names for camp food, brutal guards, severe beatings, and bungling bureaucracy, the zek counterlanguage includes numerous cynical sayings that call into question the benevolence of the Soviet regime: "Moscow does not heed tears." "If you have a neck, a yoke will be found for it." Other sayings give grimly humorous twists to official slogans and ideological dicta. "Beating determines consciousness," for example, is a pun which would doubtless perturb the founder of modern communism and author of *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Nor would the OGPU, the secret police of Stalin's time, have found especially amusing the new significance attached to its initials: *O, Gospodi, pomogi udrat'!*—"Oh Lord, help me escape!"

More indicative of the desperate audacity of the prisoners than these sayings, however, are the tattoos that some of them scrape into the skin of their forehead, cheek, or chest with an improvised needle and an ink compounded of ash and urine: "Slave of the CPSU." "Communists drink the blood of the people." "Communists = butchers." "Lenin was a butcher," one creative prisoner inscribed on his right cheek, completing the counterslogan on his left with "Millions are suffering because of him." Although during the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years this self-mutilating form of protest could bring an added prison sentence or even execution, the usual response of prison authorities was to have the camp doctor simply cut out the tattoo and stitch together the edges of remaining skin. This procedure, however, did not always deter the enemies of the people; repeat offenses were common. Anatoly Marchenko related that one prisoner,

nicknamed "The Stare" by fellow inmates, had had so many tattoos removed that what little skin was left on his forehead was pulled together too tight for him to shut his eyes.[27]

By such forlorn actions do the victims of totalitarian rule register their resentment and their undaunted determination to speak the truth. But there is something wrong here. Things are not supposed to happen this way. Big Brother's victims are supposed to go down whimpering in defeat and resignation, not crying defiance and refusing at all costs to embrace the big lie. They are supposed to parrot the approved slogans, not mock them. And if this should be so in the Gulag, certainly it should be so among the presumably more docile citizenry in the rest of totalitarian society. Clearly that is not the case. Clearly the manipulation of language has not succeeded to the extent one might expect from reading *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. The existence of vigorous counterlanguages in the Soviet Union after seventy years of steady indoctrination of the masses by the Communist party is proof of that.

What accounts for the failure? The most obvious answer is that totalitarian governments—doublethink notwithstanding—have not managed sufficiently to control reality and that their inability to do so has made their language suspect to citizens and given rise to alternative views of reality. And part of the reason for their inability to control reality—strange as this may sound—is that totalitarian governments have not been totalitarian enough, or at least not consistently so.

Why, for example, did official publications in Nazi Germany continue to make use of certain expressions, such as "anti-Semitism" and "Third Reich," long after Goebbels had ordered a ban on them? Why did Goebbels himself, in violation of his own instructions to the German press, continue to use the word "propaganda" in a negative as well as a positive sense?[28] And why did the custodians of Aryan culture in his ministry neglect to outlaw the publication and sale of Burckhardt's letters to Preen, with their prophetic nineteenth-century insights into twentieth-century despotism?[29] Could they not see that it was their world and their philistinism Burckhardt was describing? In the name of public orthodoxy they should have extended their bookburning enthusiasm to this volume and all others implicitly anti-Nazi.

Similarly in the Soviet Union, why did the regime permit continued publication of prerevolutionary literature and scholarship? Why didn't the Communist rulers long ago destroy this pocket of the bourgeois past? Did they not understand that it breeds heresy?

If they had, would their wardens in the prison camps—the very heart of Stalin's empire, where his power over minds and bodies was presumably most complete—have permitted Solzhenitsyn to get his hands on a copy of Dal's nineteenth-century dictionary of the Russian language?[30] Could no one foresee the dissident paths into which familiarity with this work would lead? A thoroughgoing Orwellian regime, more tidy and less tolerant, would have seized it and set it to flames at once.

The failure of the Nazis and Communists to be both consistent in their use of language and totally efficient in rooting out all sources of traditional thought helped to prevent their achieving a monopoly of the word. But the resistance they have met in the form of counterlanguages is not to be explained solely by their lack of consistency and efficiency. It owes something as well to the inability of totalitarian governments, not for want of monumental effort, to burn the love of truth and liberty out of the human breast. Although under the strain of protracted interrogation and torture Winston Smith despairs that "the spirit of Man" will prevail against the total state, the recurrent uprisings and persistent dissent in totalitarian societies are considerable cause for optimism. "They" may cage the body, but their words have so far failed to cage the mind.

This is a hopeful fact. But it does not entitle us to say with finality that totalitarian language can never be made to control the thought of everyone or that Orwell was mistaken in seeming to suggest it might. For the geopolitical situation described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*—a world dominated by ruthlessly energetic superstates with fully developed systems of reality control—does not yet obtain. Relatively free societies still exist as a counterpoise to totalitarian power; the propaganda of Radio Beijing or Radio Havana can be contradicted by the BBC or Radio Martí. Indeed, one of the lessons of 1989, which saw the collapse of one Communist government after another, is that the mass media used by totalitarianism as an agent of its domination can also be an agent of its downfall. But suppose (it is not an impossibility) that free societies did not exist, and suppose, say, that Stalin's successors had been as relentless and heartless as he. Can we be certain that another thirty years of Stalinist helmsmanship would not have sufficed to eliminate counterlanguage and silence the voices of dissent once and for all? Or suppose Hitler had won the war and by winning it gained the additional twenty years he said were needed in order to rear a generation of Germans who had "known no other conception of the world" than the National Socialist.[31] Especially if

the rest of the globe had turned into a garrison state in the meantime, can we be sure he would have failed or that literature and language in the New Order would not have evolved along Orwellian lines?

This inquiry leads to several reasonable conclusions about totalitarian language and George Orwell's description of it.

1. Aside from differences in ideological content, the languages of nazism and communism are alike in a number of crucial respects. Employing the same sort of terminology—euphemisms, superlatives, dehumanizing and abusive expressions, and narrowly defined political terms—the Nazi and Communist languages also aim at the same object: constricting and controlling thought. Of itself this does not, of course, prove that "Red equals Brown," that communism and nazism are two sides of the same totalitarian equation. But the close resemblance between Nazi German and Communist discourse does lend support to those observers—among them Friedrich and Brzezinski, Schapiro, Borkenau, Rauschning, and Orwell himself—who have argued that the similarities between national socialism and communism are more significant than the differences, and that the two are actually varieties of the same uniquely twentieth-century regime, the one often designated "totalitarian."

2. In general, the Orwellian Model of Totalitarian Language is accurate. But it is somewhat eclectic and overly logical, with a few of its features, such as the absolute reduction of vocabulary or the complete separation of Party language from the language of the masses, being based on the experience of democratic rather than totalitarian societies. Although this eclecticism may have been useful in portraying a perfect despotism, it diminishes somewhat the reliability of the Orwellian Model as a description of real totalitarian language.

3. For reasons rooted in present political reality and—one hopes—in human nature, the language of historical totalitarianism has had only limited success in achieving the goal of thought control. Orwell may have expected this development. We cannot, of course, dismiss the possibility that someday, under the right conditions, totalitarian language can be made to work. But the mass of evidence indicates that there are limits to how far even the most stringently regulated language can distort human beings' perception of reality. In the long run, at least, it would seem that for a language to be believable and thus to have a lasting effect on people, it must be grounded in objective reality, must be at least partly empirical in nature. For apparently men and women are not trapped in the *Zwischenwelt* of language, are not locked up in the Heideggerian house of Being; contrary to the claims of O'Brien and linguistic determinism, thought is not sur-

rounded by an unbreachable wall of words which divides the observer from objective reality, preventing him from seeing beyond language to the way things really are. The great weakness of totalitarian language, it turns out, is that it too often ignores or misrepresents the "solid world" where "stones are hard, water is wet, objects unsupported fall toward the earth's center."[32] It fails to foist its "fictitious world" on the masses precisely because it is fictitious and therefore not credible. Too late the ruling elites of East Germany and other Soviet-bloc countries came to sense this. By the time they took the first feeble steps toward cleaning up official language by getting rid of "comrade" and similarly corrupted words, their hour had struck. A major task of statesmanship in post-Communist Europe will be to create a more open and referential language suitable for the public discourse of a free people.

Of these conclusions, the notion that there is a uniquely "totalitarian" language—as distinguishable from, say, democratic language—is perhaps the most controversial. One can imagine two groups of people who would take sharp exception to it.

The first group, not surprisingly, would consist of orthodox Communists. Not only would they deny that the language of Marxism-Leninism has anything in commmon with that of nazism; they would also claim that the language of capitalist ruling classes has far more resemblance to Newspeak than anything one reads in the pages of *Pravda* or hears in the speeches of a Castro or a Deng Xiaoping. Indeed, almost all the abuses of language I have been documenting—the corruption and elimination of words, the use of superlatives and Manichaean expressions, the attempt to create a "false consciousness" in the masses—are routinely ascribed by Communists to the "ruling circles" of Western democracies.[33]

It would be easy to dismiss such charges as acts of psychological projection, which, of course, in part they are. But then one would still have to answer those critics on the non-Communist Left who, in David Widgery's words, see no difference between the language of "a Free World that isn't free" and "a Communist Bloc that isn't Communist. . . . Is not Newspeak now at least as good a description of the diplomatic jargon of the Reagan/Thatcher/Kohl axis as of the editorial prose of *Pravda*?"[34] As proof that democratic governments are as guilty as Communist governments of corrupting language, these critics often quote from the duplicitous and euphemistic phraseology of various Watergate conspirators, Pentagon bureaucrats, or (their favorite example) the American army officer in Vietnam who muttered something about destroying a village in order to save it.

Now it is one thing to say that politicians and bureaucrats in democratic countries frequently abuse language. This they undeniably do, and it is hard to wince at the sound of "Reaganomics" or "Peacekeeper missile" without thinking that political discourse in democratic America has greatly degenerated since the days when Jefferson was composing the Declaration of Independence and Publius the *Federalist* essays. But are people really deceived by phrases like "revenue enhancement" or "surreptitious entry"? Or by the verbal acrobatics of an Alexander Haig? If so, the opposition party or the press or the Murray Edelmans of the scholarly world will soon enlighten them.

And this is the whole point. Far from setting up governments that can reasonably hope to monopolize words and redefine them at will, liberal democracies like the United States have attempted, as it were, to institutionalize counterlanguages. That is to say, by separating the powers of government and placing them in different pairs of hands, and by protecting the freedom of speech and press, they have generally ensured that many conflicting (and often confusing) voices in both the public and private domains get a hearing. No one person or party can monopolize public discourse, and a democratic politician who tries to conceal an ugly truth with a windstorm of words is at least as likely to be hounded from office as to control anyone's thoughts. On the other hand, a totalitarian politician who speaks with a forked tongue stands a good chance that many of his listeners will believe him, and in any case no one will be exposing his lies in the public press. Another way of stating all this is that liberal democratic societies are relatively open, their public language relatively "heterogeneous."[35] By comparison totalitarian societies are closed, their public language homogeneous. Obviously it is the latter kind of language, the language of one-party dictatorships, not of liberal democracies, that Orwell was describing in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Not that liberal democracies have nothing to learn from Orwell about the use and misuse of words. At the very least, democratic statesmen made familiar with totalitarian language by reading *Nineteen Eighty-Four* would be less likely than a Neville Chamberlain to be taken in by the disingenuous words of dictators. And even if reading "Politics and the English Language" will not help us balance a budget or resolve a controversial issue like abortion, paying serious attention to it could help us to restore clarity and candor to public discourse.

Democratic peoples possess considerable freedom of expression and opinion, and with that freedom comes the right (and the re-

sponsibility) to refuse to let loaded words think their thoughts for them. They have the power to reform their language and think more clearly; and this means, as Orwell reminded us, that they can better their politics. It would have pleased him to know that Edwin Newman's eminently readable books on the use and abuse of language have made the bestseller lists, that journalists like William Safire and Kenneth Hudson have carried on his crusade against the enemies of lucid English both within and without the Circumlocution Office, and that pressure groups have been formed to lobby for "linguistic honesty" in government. In Britain and America, at least, it seems that Orwell impressed on the popular and journalistic consciousness, as no professional linguist could have done, the implications of diseased language for politics. We can draw comfort from that. Perhaps we have begun to plod some distance away from Oceania since the time when Orwell's American publisher threatened to blue-pencil the appendix on Newspeak.[36]

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APPENDIX A

NEWSPEAK, CABLESE, AND BUREAUCRATIC CODE LANGUAGE

Considering its centrality to the novel and the pains he took to explain its purpose and its basic rules, it is disappointing that Orwell offered in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* so few illustrations of Newspeak language.

One of only a handful is the statement that *Big Brother is ungood*, a contradiction in terms meaning that Big Brother does not do the will of Big Brother. This absurdity is put forward in Orwell's appendix to the novel as proof of a Newspeaker's inability to voice criticism of the Party without sounding doubleplus ridiculous to other Newspeakers. Another example is *Oldthinkers unbellyfeel Ingsoc*, a more logical expression which, roughly rendered, means that persons with a prerevolutionary mind-set cannot have a proper emotional appreciation of English socialism.[1]

Why the shortage of Newspeak specimens? It may be, as some have suggested, that Orwell as an amateur linguist had neither the inclination nor the competence to create a complete and systematic Newspeak grammar;[2] and if so, this would doubtless have discouraged him from attempting to compose an entire Newspeak article, say, or

to record a conversation carried on in Newspeak between members of the Inner Party.

The dearth of illustrations in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* naturally has tempted some critics to concoct their own in order to make up the deficiency. Many of these efforts have failed abysmally, but a few have borne fruit. Most convincing are the results of exertions by Foley and Ayer and three of their students in the middle 1960s. After compiling and programming into an IBM 7094 computer at MIT a rudimentary Newspeak dictionary and a necessarily incomplete set of Newspeak grammatical rules, they fed into the computer a passage from Orwell's autobiographical essay "Why I Write." In little more than a minute the machine translated the passage into Newspeak. Here is the passage, broken into brief paragraphs and paralleled on the right by its Newspeak corruption:

What I have most wanted to do throughout the past ten years is to make political writing into an art. My starting point is always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice.	What I have doubleplus wanted through ten anteyears is to make politwrite goodform. My startfeel is always crimethink.
When I sit down to write a book, I do not say to myself, "I am going to produce a work of art."	When I start to bookwrite I do not selfspeak I will make a goodform.
I write because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention, and my initial concern is to get a hearing.	I write because there is some untrue I want to openput, some true I want circumlooked, and my startfeel is intercom.
But I could not do the work of writing a book, or even a long magazine article, if it were not also an aesthetic experience.	But I could not bookwrite, or even magwrite longwise, if it was not also bellyfeel.
Anyone who cares to examine my work will see that even when it is downright propaganda it contains much that a full-time politician would consider irrelevant.	Anyone who wants to intralook my work will see that even when it is Partythink it holds much that an Innerpolit would think offpoint.
I am not able, and I do not want, completely to abandon the world-view that I acquired in childhood.	I cannot, and unwant to fullwise drop the oldthink I getted in plusyoung.
So long as I remain alive and well I shall continue to feel strongly about prose style, to love the	While I stay lifeful and goodwise I will feel strongwise about Newspeakform, plusgoodfeel

surface of the earth, and to take a pleasure in solid objects and scraps of useless information.

It is no use trying to suppress that side of myself.

The job is to reconcile my ingrained likes and dislikes with the essentially public, non-individual activities that this age forces on all of us.[3]

the ground, solids, and unuseful infobits.

A try to downput those selfthings is unuseful.

The job is to rekcile my intrabuilded goodfeels and ungoodfeels with the mostwise unselful acts the nowtime onputs everybody.

Obviously the Newspeak translation distorts the style and sense of the original language. In so doing, it deprives Orwell of his uniqueness and individuality as an author, leaving him instead a sort of metallic "voice" indistinguishable from the clipped cadences of any other writer of Newspeak. "What is lost in translation," Foley and Ayer rightly remarked, "is a man."[4] The use of a computer in accomplishing this depersonalization invites comparisons with the speakwrite, the versificator, and the novel-writing machines of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Some critics have confused Newspeak with the so-called hybrid jargon mandatory for memoranda and other communications within the Ministry of Truth. Of this quasi Newspeak Orwell furnished a fair number of examples, and inasmuch as they do bear some resemblance to Newspeak, being a kind of evolutionary link between it and Oldspeak but made up mostly of Newspeak terms and abbreviations, they merit attention here.

Through a pneumatic tube in his cubicle at Minitrue Winston Smith receives a message ordering him to alter a small portion of the past: "times 17.3.84 bb speech malreported africa rectify."[5] A possible expansion of this message would be "The *Times* of 17 March 1984 incorrectly reports a reference to Africa in a speech by Big Brother. Rectify this." Big Brother, it appears, had predicted a Eurasian offensive in North Africa; events proved him wrong. In a deliberately oblique manner which facilitates doublethink in the forger, the ministerial message is directing Winston to rewrite the *Times* article, retrospectively substituting for the incorrect prediction a correct one.

Another instruction reads: "times 3.12.83 reporting bb dayorder doubleplusungood refs unpersons rewrite fullwise upsub antefiling."[6] Orwell provided an Oldspeak version of this: "The reporting of Big Brother's Order for the Day in the *Times* of December 3rd 1983 is extremely unsatisfactory and makes references to nonexistent persons. Rewrite it in full and submit your draft to higher authority before filing."[7] In his Order for the Day, Winston discovers on retrieving and reading the *Times* article, Big Brother had commended the work of one Comrade Withers, now an unperson and therefore unmentionable. Officially Withers never existed; hence his name must be rubbed out of the records, without, however, anyone ever explicitly acknowledging, even in departmental directives confined to a few hands,

the falsification of fact afoot. Again, the oblique language of the message is intended to trigger an act of doublethink which enables Winston almost nonchalantly to roll back the wheel of history long enough to replace one of its spokes.

The extreme economy of words, the lack of punctuation and capitalization, and the extensive use of numerals, abbreviations, and Latin prefixes in the messages of Minitrue have prompted more than one commentator to compare their language with cablese. Certainly Orwell was familiar with the compressed syntax of telegraphic language. As a correspondent in France and Germany for the *Observer* at the end of the Second World War, he probably used it himself or had the opportunity to read cablegrams similar in form to the one cited by Richard Rees in his study of Orwell, which began: "in brilliant sunshine while bells pealed etband played party refugees welcomed parmonster demo unions cumsalvoes rockets etflags etembraces stop banners read quote hail heroes unquote stop addresses parprominentest reps govt cumgensecy paraphrasing leaflets cumtext quote welcome dear guests."[8] The reporter who filed this dispatch was describing a British town's enthusiastic official reception for refugees granted political asylum in the country. Unfortunately, two rival newspapers carried contrary descriptions. Which reporter, if any, was faithful to the facts? Perhaps none. "One of them had to boost the occasion up," Rees speculated, "and the others had to write it down," each according to his paper's editorial policy or partisan predilections. "It is probably easier," Rees continued, "to carry out that sort of assignment in a technical jargon than in plain English."[9] The same can be said for the work of both Winston and the anonymous functionary from whom he receives his orders to rewrite history.

Graver than the misrepresentations of Rees's unnamed reporters is the subject of a cablegram Orwell may have remembered reading in Eugene Lyons's *Assignment in Utopia*. When in 1930 Mikhail Tomsky, a member of the so-called Right Opposition to Stalin's collectivization policies, yielded the battle and signaled his submission to the dictator by praising him publicly, Lyons, Moscow correspondent for United Press International at the time, cabled his home office: "tomsky oppositionist leader again recanted political errors speech tiflis yesterweek publicked today wellinformeds consider significant marking collapse antistalin opposition reliquidation kulaks tomsky said quote monolithic party under leadership genius stalin best disciple lenin always right stop right opposition left deviationists tools kulaks kulak agents unquote."[10] With communications of this kind we stand but a step or two removed from the form and structure if not the spirit of Newspeak. But although in his conception of the hybrid jargon of Minitrue Orwell may have drawn inspiration from such laconically worded cables, he undoubtedly was also borrowing from the bureaucratic code language used by certain agencies and executors of the Nazi and Soviet governments.

Observe that Orwell's ministerial jargon includes a number of euphemisms. These play an essential part in the concealment of truth and the

perversion of history. In the counterfeit world created by the Ministry of Truth, official promises are never broken but rather "malquoted" by newspapers, production forecasts never prove wrong but turn out to have been "misprints," statistics are never juggled but "readjusted," books and articles are never rewritten but "rectified." Expressions like these have much in common with the language of the confidential communication, dated 7 September 1942, from an officer in the SS Main Office for Race and Settlement Questions to various subordinate officials:

The application of ordinance RF-SS of 6.7.1941 (G IV D 2 c 4883/40 g – 196) concerning special treatment of Poles has now been extended to Czechs.

In the enclosure information of the corresponding order (RSHA – IV D 1 b – 138/40 II of 13.6.1942) is given.[11]

To an unsuspecting outsider this might have seemed an altogether routine and tiresome missive from one bureaucrat to another. Nothing in its literal language suggests that perhaps thousands of human lives hung in the balance. To appreciate the full significance of the letter, one would need to know, first, that it concerned Poles and Czechs accused of having had sexual intercourse with German women and, second, that the term "special treatment" (*Sonderbehandlung*) was an SS euphemism for execution. This knowledge would naturally change the whole complexion of things. What was being contemplated was mass murder by another name. The euphemism, the businesslike language, the appearance of propriety and due process, and the very tone of officialism threw a slick camouflage over the injustice. Terror no longer stalked the streets untamed and naked; it sat at a desk pecking a typewriter and rubber-stamping its way through proper channels. And it spoke an Orwellian tongue.

APPENDIX B

NAZI ABBREVIATIONS AND STUMP COMPOUNDS

Below are but a handful in a galaxy of National Socialist abbreviations.[1] More than a few of them practically supplanted their unshortened originals. As Hitler reportedly remarked about the abbreviation *SA*, its original meanings "were really irrelevant, for SA is a special conception and stands for itself: it has grown out of and beyond the original significations attached to the words."[2] Abbreviations took on almost a life of their own, and the Nazis' belief in the power of terms like these to influence popular thought even led them at one point to forbid the German press ever to use the acronym RAF (British Royal Air Force) "because this indeed is a very attractive and effective propagandistic abbreviation."[3]

Truncated terms served sundry purposes for the Nazis. Some, such as *KdF* and *SD*, reminded Germans that an impersonal and often deadly bureaucracy confronted them at every turn, controlling life in all its aspects. Others created an impression of dynamism; *Stuka*, *SS*, and *SA* fall into this "irresistible force" class of abbreviations. Still other terms, such as *WeWi* and *WWJ*, seem to have acted as euphemisms concealing unpleasant realities or controversial facts.

There are probably several explanations, not necessarily inconsistent with one another, for the proliferation of abbreviated terms in both the Third Reich and Soviet Russia. One is the lengthiness of names for official agencies and institutions, which trait may have tempted government bureaucrats and party functionaries to invent convenient shorthand expressions. Another is that telescoped language is part of the general "bureaucratisation and rationalisation of modern life."[4] The reduction of whole phrases to a few letters somehow parallels the reduction of the individual to a cipher in a system dominated by bureaucratic routine and sterile conformity. A third explanation is that both the Nazis and the Bolsheviks deliberately patterned much of their language after the so-called telegraphic terminology used by the armed forces during World War I; presumably the totalitarian party's creation of its own telegraphic terminology would call attention to the militaristic character and tightly disciplined organization of the movement.[5]

Term	Expansion	Translation/Explanation
BDM	*Bund Deutscher Mädel*	League of German Maidens: division of Hitler Youth in which membership was compulsory for girls 14 to 18 years of age
DAF	*Deutsche Arbeitsfront*	German Labor Front
Gestapo	*Geheime Staatspolizei*	Secret State Police
HJ	*Hitler Jugend*	Hitler Youth
KdF	*Kraft durch Freude*	Strength through Joy: recreational organization sponsored by German Labor Front
KZ	*Konzentrationslager*	concentration camp
NS	*Nationalsozialistisch*	National Socialist (adjective)
NSDAP	*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*	National Socialist German Workers party
NSFK	*NS-Flieger-Korps*	National Socialist Aviators Corps
NSV	*Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt*	National Socialist People's Welfare (Organization)
OSAF	*Oberste SA Führer*	Supreme SA Leader
Promi	*Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda*	Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda

Term	Expansion	Translation/Explanation
Rüst	*Rüstungsministerium*	Ministry of Armaments
SA	*Sturm-Abteilung*	Storm Detachment: Brownshirts
SD	*Sicherheitsdienst*	Security Service
Sipo	*Sicherheitspolizei*	Security Police
SS	*Schutz-Staffel*	Defense Echelon
Staf	*Standartenführer*	Regiment Leader (SA)
Stuka	*Sturzkampfflugzeug*	dive-bomber
TV	*Totenkopfverbände*	Death's-Head Units
WeWi	*Wehrwirtschaft*	Defense economy: euphemism for Nazi rearmament program
WWJ	*Wirtschaftlich wertvoller Jude*	"economically valuable Jew"

APPENDIX C

THE PREFIX *SONDER-*

In *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder* Joseph Wulf has amassed much documentary material illustrating the euphemistic uses to which Nazi officialdom put the expression *sonder* (special). It became a code word for murder. Listed below are a few of the compounds formed with *sonder* as a prefix, together with translations and explanations. It should be noted that the equivalent word in Russian (*spets*) has sometimes been used in a similar fashion by the Soviet secret police.

Word	Literal Translation	Real Meaning
S.B.		often-used abbreviation; see *Sonderbehandlung*
Sonderaktion	special action	mass extermination, especially of men, women, children, and elderly of Jewish ghettos, by SS, army units, etc.
Sonderaufgabe	special assignment	order to execute Jews
sonderbehandeln	to treat specially; to give special treatment to	to execute condemned groups or individuals; to murder

Word	Literal Translation	Real Meaning
Sonderbehandlung	special treatment	murder; execution, either individually or in groups, of Jews, Gypsies, POWs, partisan fighters captured in eastern territories, foreign civilian workers of non-Aryan blood accused of having sexual intercourse with German women, German citizens deemed dangerous to public morale at war's outbreak, etc.
Sondererlasse	special remission	reprieve from execution, especially for foreign workers capable of being "Germanized" (*eingedeutscht*)
Sonderkommando	special squad	team of mass executioners
S-Wagen (*Sonderwagen*)	special van	vehicle used for gassing Jews; proved insufficient for handling the many cases of "special treatment"

APPENDIX D

COMMUNIST BIPOLAR WORD PAIRS

"Binary division," Colin Cherry has written, "arises naturally in our thoughts and language."[1] But more so in some people than in others, and perhaps in few as often or with as much intensity as in orthodox Communists, for whom politics is a polarized affair in which people have only two extremes from which to choose. The following list of antithetical pairs of adjectives and nouns, gleaned from Soviet, Chinese, East German, and Cuban Communist sources, illustrates on a modest scale the dichotomous modes of expression rampant in Communist discourse. The first word in each pair is positively charged, pointing to a class, quality, force, or idea said to be consonant with Marxism-Leninism. The second word, ideological antonym of the first, is negative, referring to a class, quality, force, or idea considered to be in some way opposed or repugnant to Marxism-Leninism. Note that some of these terms are not in the conventional sense strictly political. "Metaphysics" and "idealism," for instance, come from philosophy, "formalism" from literature, and "capitalism" from economics. The application of bipolar language to these and other realms reflects the fact that totalitarian ideo-

logues regard the whole of life in all its complexity and color as a two-dimensional battleground between light and dark: all areas of existence are made up of Manichaean halves, and those "eclecticists" who view reality as a continuum of possibilities or who argue in politics for what the Chinese Maoists scornfully called a *zhongjian daolu* (middle road) are simply squinting at the world through defective lenses.

antifascist—fascist
antifeudal—feudal
anti-imperialist—imperialist
antimilitarism—militarism
assistance—interference[2]
communism—capitalism
Communist—anti-Communist
concrete—unconcrete[3]
creative—uncreative
democratic—anti(un)democratic
dialectics—metaphysics
emancipation—slavery
equality—discrimination
freedom—oppression
freedom—unfreedom (*Unfreiheit*)
future—past
humanist—antihumanist
internationalism—interventionism
labor—capital
liberation—domination
loyalty—treason
Marxist—anti(un)-Marxist
materialism—idealism
national—antinational
nationalism—cosmopolitanism
new—old
patriot—traitor
peace—unpeace (*Unfriede*)
peace—war
peace-loving—aggressive
peace-loving—revanchist
popular—antipopular
progress—reaction
progressive—reactionary
proletariat—bourgeoisie
realism—formalism
revolution—counterrevolution
revolutionary—counterrevolutionary
scientific—anti(un)scientific
socialist—antisocialist
socialist—bourgeois
Soviet—anti-Soviet
true (genuine, real, proletarian)—
false (formal, phony, bourgeois)[4]

APPENDIX E

ISMS OF COMMUNIST DISCOURSE

The columns below, which include most of the better-known negative isms of Communist language, should suggest just how wide-ranging the use of isms has been among Marxist-Leninist parties. Some of the terms listed, such as "Titoism" and "Veselovsky-ism," have long since passed out of use. Others, such as "individualism" and "revisionism," are commonly used outside of Communist circles, but generally with different and less pejorative senses than those that Communists annex to them.

adventurism
anti-Sovietism
Arakcheyevism
Bernsteinianism
Blanquiism
Bukharinism
bureaucratism
capitalism
careerism
centrism
chauvinism
Chen Tu-hsiuism
collaborationism
colonialism

conciliationism
constructivism
cosmopolitanism
departmentalism
deviationism
diversionism
doctrinairism
dogmatism
economism
expansionism
formalism
fractionalism
Freudianism
groupism
hegemonism
hooliganism
imperialism[1]
individualism
Kautskyism
landlordism
Lasalleanism
leftism
lobbyism
Lo Chang-lunism
Luxemburgism
Masarykism
Menshevism
militarism[2]
Millerandism
monopolism
neocolonialism
neofascism
neoglobalism
neo-Malthusianism
neutralism
objectivism
opportunism
parasitism
parliamentarism
particularism
practicism
Proudhonism
pseudorevolutionism
Reaganism
reformism (bourgeois reformism, bourgeois social-reformism)
revanchism
revisionism
revolutionarism
rightism
routinism
rowdyism
Saint-Simonism
schematism
sectarianism
social democratism
social imperialism[3]
subjectivism
tailism (*khvosmizmom*)[4]
Talmudism
theoreticism
Titoism
toadyism
Trotskyism
unionism
utopism (petit-bourgeois utopism)
Veselovskyism
voluntarism
windbagism[5]
Zinovievism

NOTES

Introduction: Language and the Civil Social Order

1. A. L. Morton, *The English Utopia* (London, 1969), 269. In his criticism Morton coupled *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with Aldous Huxley's *Ape and Essence*.

2. See Orwell's letter to Roger Senhouse, a representative of Orwell's publisher, dated 26 Dec. 1948, in *The Collected Essays, Journalism, and Letters of George Orwell* (hereafter cited as *CEJL*), ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, 4 vols. (New York, 1968), 4:460. A number of perceptive critics have pointed out that *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is neither pure fantasy nor blind prophecy but rather a satirical projection into the future of present-day affairs and modes of thought. See, e.g., Keith Alldritt, *The Making of George Orwell* (New York, 1969), 156; Jenni Calder, *Chronicles of Conscience* (Pittsburgh, 1968), 267; Emanuel Edrich, "George Orwell and the Satire in Horror," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 4 (Spring 1962): 98; E. M. Forster, *Two Cheers for Democracy* (New York, 1951), 61; Jeffrey Meyers, *A Reader's Guide to*

George Orwell (London, 1975), 144; Philip Rahv, "The Unfuture of Utopia," *Partisan Review* 16 (July 1949): 744; Richard J. Voorhees, *The Paradox of George Orwell* (West Lafayette, Ind., 1961), 87; Frank W. Wadsworth, "Orwell's Later Work," *University of Kansas City Review* 22 (Summer 1956): 288.

3. Eugene Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York, 1937), 240. Orwell reviewed this book, written by a disillusioned sympathizer with the Soviet "experiment," for the *New English Weekly* in June 1938. See *CEJL* 1:332–34.

4. Arthur Koestler, *The Trail of the Dinosaur* (New York, 1955), 25. For Orwell's comments on postwar conditions in London, see his "London Letter to *Partisan Review*" (Summer 1946), in *CEJL* 4:185–86, 188–89.

5. See Orwell's "As I Please" column in the weekly socialist paper *Tribune*, 12 May 1944, in *CEJL* 3:147; "As I Please," 2 Feb. 1945, in *CEJL* 3:328–29; "You and the Atom Bomb," *CEJL* 4:6–10; "Toward European Unity," *CEJL* 4:370–75.

6. Cf. Matthew Hodgart, "From *Animal Farm* to *Nineteen Eighty-Four*," in *The World of George Orwell*, ed. Miriam Gross (New York, 1971), 142.

7. Joseph Jones, "Utopia as Dirge," *American Quarterly* 2 (Fall 1950): 216.

8. Isaac Deutscher, *Russia in Transition* (New York, 1957), 238.

9. John Wesley Young, "Totalitarian Language: Orwell's Newspeak and Its Nazi and Communist Predecessors" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Virginia, 1987), 90–164. Cf. William Steinhoff, *George Orwell and the Origins of* 1984 (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1975), 4, 190.

10. James Walsh, "An Appreciation of an Individualist Writer," in *Orwell's* Nineteen Eighty-Four: *Text, Sources, Criticism*, ed. Irving Howe (New York, 1963), 212–16; Howard Fast, *Literature and Reality* (1950), quoted in Charles I. Glicksberg, "The Literary Contribution of George Orwell," *Arizona Quarterly* 10 (Autumn 1954): 242–43. See also Morton, *English Utopia*, 274; Deutscher, *Russia in Transition*, 230.

11. Gabriel Gersh, "A Reactionary Radical," *Modern Age* 13 (Summer 1969): 312; Philip Toynbee, "Passionate Sanity," *Observer* (London), 3 Dec. 1950; Anthony West, "Hidden Damage," *New Yorker*, 28 Jan. 1956, 98–104. See also Gerald Fiderer, "Masochism as Literary Strategy: Orwell's Psychological Novels," *Literature and Psychology* 20, no. 1 (1970): 3–21; Samuel A. Yorks, "George Orwell: Seer over His Shoulder," *Bucknell Review* 9 (March 1960): 32–45. Cf. T. R. Fyvel, "George Orwell and Eric Blair: Glimpses of a Dual Life," *Encounter* 13 (July 1959): 60.

12. "Arthur Koestler," *CEJL* 3:234–35; "Wells, Hitler, and the World State," *CEJL* 2:141–42. See also "The English People," *CEJL* 3:12; "Author's Preface to the Ukrainian Edition of *Animal Farm*," *CEJL* 3:405.

13. Mary McCarthy, *The Writing on the Wall* (New York, 1970), 161; Lawrence Malkin, "Halfway to 1984," *Horizon* 12 (Spring 1970): 33. See also Peter Grothe, *To Win the Minds of Men* (Palo Alto, Calif., 1958), 4; Anthony Hartley, *A State of England* (New York, 1963), 26; George Woodcock, "Half-Truths on Orwell," *Nation*, 11 Oct. 1971, 342; Milan Šimečka, "Newspeak and *Glasnost*," *Times Literary Supplement*, 6–12 Jan. 1989, 10.

14. Czeslaw Milosz, *The Captive Mind*, tr. Jane Zielonko (New York, 1953), 42.

15. T. R. Fyvel, "A Writer's Life," *World Review*, n.s., no. 16 (June 1950): 8. See also Fyvel, *George Orwell* (New York, 1982), 2.

16. Vaclav Havel, quoted in Bruce W. Nelan, "The Year of the People," *Time*, 1 Jan. 1990, 50.

17. For criticisms, see *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, s.v. "Totalitarianism"; Benjamin Barber, "Conceptual Foundations of Totalitarianism," in Carl J. Friedrich, Michael Curtis, and Benjamin R. Barber, *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three Views* (New York, 1969), 3–52; Alexander J. Groth, "The 'Isms' in Totalitarianism," in *Political Life and Social Change: Readings for Introductory Political Science*, ed. Charles F. Andrain (Belmont, Calif., 1971), 294–319; Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* (New York, 1985). Cf. Chalmers Johnson, "Comparing Communist Systems," in *Change in Communist Systems*, ed. Chalmers Johnson (Stanford, Calif., 1970), 1–32; Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Soviet Political System: Transformation or Degeneration," in *Dilemmas of Change in Soviet Politics*, ed. Zbigniew Brzezinski (New York, 1969), 1–34.

18. Cf. Carl J. Friedrich, "The Evolving Theory and Practice of Totalitarian Regimes," in Friedrich, Curtis, and Barber, *Totalitarianism in Perspective*, 153.

19. See the excerpts from Havel's New Year's Day address in the *New York Times*, 2 Jan. 1990, national edition; and his remarks to the U. S. Congress, excerpted in ibid., 22 Feb. 1990. Cf. the remarks of Jan Urban, an official of Civic Forum, in Steven Greenhouse, "From Malcontents to Power Brokers: Civic Forum Takes Hold in Prague," ibid., 28 Nov. 1989; the Soviet Parliament deputy's description of Gorbachev as the man "who destroyed totalitarianism in this country," in Francis X. Clines, "Parliament Votes Expanded Powers for Soviet Leader," ibid., 14 March 1990; and the comment of Mikhail Chulaki, in Craig R. Whitney, "Moscow's Last Hope," ibid., 16 Feb. 1990.

20. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1958), 474–75. See also David Binder, "Military Trials of Security Forces Begin," *New York Times*, 9 Jan. 1990, national edition; Thomas L. Friedman, "East Bloc Trip Buoys Baker yet Alerts Him to the Odds," ibid., 12 Feb. 1990; John Kifner, "Fed Up with Lies, Romanians Are Faced with Harsh Truths," ibid., 26 Feb. 1990.

21. Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 392. See also ibid., 350, 353, 361–63, 420, 495.

22. Ibid., 350. See also ibid., 392, 458.

23. Ibid., 468–74.

24. Ibid., 495.

25. W. F. Bolton, *The Language of 1984* (Oxford, 1984).

26. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan; or, The Matter, Forme, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil*, ed. Michael Oakeshott (London: Collier-Macmillan, Collier Books, 1962), 484.

27. John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding and A Treatise on the Conduct of the Understanding* (Philadelphia, 1852), 325.

28. On empiricist epistemology, see Fred R. Dallmayr, *Language and Politics* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1984), 16, 22, 28; Moritz Schlick, "Positivism and Realism," in *Logical Positivism*, ed. A. J. Ayer (New York, 1959), 82–107.

29. Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, ed. Joseph Devey (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1902), 21.

30. Rudolf Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language," in *Logical Positivism*, 60–81. See also Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, 2d ed. (London, 1956), esp. 9, 31; Dallmayr, *Language and Politics*, 36–37. For the views of Bacon and Locke on refining language by linking it with sense perception and by carefully defining terms, see Bacon, *Novum Organum*, 31; Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 288–89, 298, 321, 329; Dallmayr, *Language and Politics*, 197n; Wilbur Marshall Urban, *Language and Reality* (London, 1939), 27–28. For Plato's conviction that words are inadequate to describe reality—by which he meant not the material world but the world of eternal form—see his seventh epistle, in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1961), 1590–91. On Russell and Wittgenstein, see Dallmayr, *Language and Politics*, 29–30, 32.

31. *Prometheus Unbound* 2.4.72–73.

32. Martin Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, in *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York, 1977), 193. See also Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, tr. Peter D. Hertz (New York, 1971), 62–63, 88, 90, 112, 134; Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (New York, 1971), 132, 146. See also Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth*, tr. Suzanne K. Langer (New York, 1953), 28–29; Urban, *Language and Reality*, 95, 347, 350–51; Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, tr. and ed. David E. Linge (Berkeley, Calif., 1976), 35, 77–78. On the connection between thought and language, see Joseph Church, *Language and the Discovery of Reality* (New York, 1961), 136; David E. Cooper, *Philosophy and the Nature of Language* (London, 1973), 26; Urban, *Language and Reality*, 49; Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 62–63, 126–27; Dallmayr, *Language and Politics*, 103–4.

33. Doris A. Graber, *Verbal Behavior and Politics* (Urbana, Ill., 1976), 4–6.

34. On language as symbolically reconstituting reality, see Urban, *Language and Reality*, 50–52, 332, 374–75, 618, 669. Cf. Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 29. On the *Zwischenwelt*, see Julius Laffal, *Pathological and Normal Language* (New York, 1965), 112; Graber, *Verbal Behavior and Politics*, 10. The notion of a between-world may be traceable to Wilhelm von Humboldt, who more than a century and a half ago described language as "a true realm which the intellect places between itself and the objects via the internal operation of its power." *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development*, tr. George C. Buck and Frithjof A. Raven (Coral Gables, Fla., 1971), 135. See also ibid., 39–40.

35. *Paradise Lost* 1.254–55. For a telling critique of the structuralist school of literary criticism, which has been at the forefront in promoting the view that we do not discover or record reality but rather construct it, see Gerald Graff, *Literature against Itself* (Chicago, 1979).

36. Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, ed. John B. Carroll (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), 213. See also ibid., 214, 221, 256, 259.

37. Ibid., 257. See also ibid., 57–64, 134–59, 207–19. For a discussion of the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis, see Cooper, *Philosophy*, 99–122.

38. Humboldt, *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development*, 39. For criticism of the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis, see Dwight Bolinger, *Aspects of Language* (New York, 1968), 255; Cooper, *Philosophy*, 99–122 passim; David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), 15; Kenji Hakuta, *Mirror of Language* (New York, 1986), 76. See also Graber, *Verbal Behavior and Politics*, 10.

39. Orwell's linguistic instrumentalism is evident in his statement that "good prose is like a windowpane," illustrating his conviction that language should be simple and direct and act as a window on objective reality. "Why I Write," *CEJL* 1:7. See also "New Words," *CEJL* 2:3–12; "Politics and the English Language," *CEJL* 4:138–39. On the alleged influence of logical positivism on Orwell's thinking, see Bernard Crick, *George Orwell: A Life* (Boston, 1980), 325, 361; Richard W. Bailey, "George Orwell and the English Language," in *The Future of* 1984, ed. Ejner J. Jensen (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1984), 35; Hartley, *State of England*, 50.

The statement that Orwell's views inclined toward empiricism needs to be qualified. For the most part twentieth-century empiricism rejects as meaningless verbalizations such abstractions as "fascism" and "democracy." Orwell did not. This much is apparent from his implied criticism of Stuart Chase and the General Semantics movement in "Politics and the English Language." The politically engaged writer who joined a Spanish workers' militia in order "to fight against Fascism" believed it was not only "absurd" to dismiss "fascism" as meaningless, but that antiabstractionist thinking could lead to an unsalutary political quietism. See Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (New York, 1952), 47; Orwell, "Politics and the English Language," 139. Cf. Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words* (New York, 1938), 205. Significantly, the Newspeak vocabulary does not include such abstractions as "justice," "honor," and "democracy"—presumably because, in spite of their vagueness, they describe a part of reality the totalitarian regime would like to do away with.

40. Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, tr. Ernest Barker (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1958), 5–7. See also Dallmayr, *Language and Politics*, ix, 5; Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago, 1958), 24, 26–27.

41. Quoted in Joyce O. Hertzler, *A Sociology of Language* (New York, 1965), 267. Much of what follows on the importance of language for society is based on Colin Cherry, *On Human Communication*, 3d ed. (Cambridge, Mass., 1978); Hugh Dalziel Duncan, *Symbols in Society* (New York, 1968); Hertzler, *Sociology of Language*; Humboldt, *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development*; Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. Also

suggestive are Johann Gottfried Herder, *Essay on the Origin of Language*, tr. Alexander Gode, in *On the Origin of Language* (New York, 1966); Aldous Huxley, *Words and Their Meanings* (Los Angeles, 1940); Laffal, *Pathological and Normal Language*; Carl A. Rubino, "Vis Mea Lex: Social Crisis and Political Discourse," *Yale Review* 64 (Summer 1975): 514–26; F. de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, tr. Roy Harris (London, 1983); Ronald Syme, "History and Language at Rome," *Diogenes*, no. 85 (Spring 1974): 1–11.

42. Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 327–28.

43. Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, 71–72.

44. Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 330.

45. Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), 155.

46. Marc Bouloiseau, *The Jacobin Republic, 1792–1794*, tr. Jonathan Mandelbaum (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1983), 5, 33–35; Sylvain Maréchal, "Manifesto of the Equals" (April 1796), in *Socialist Thought*, ed. Albert Fried and Ronald Sanders (New York, 1964), 52; Georg Klaus, *Sprache der Politik* (Berlin, 1971), 167. See also Ferdinand Brunot, *Histoire de la Langue Française* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1967), vol. 9, *La Révolution et l'Empire*, pt. 2, 676–713.

47. "Burnt Norton," in T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1943), 7–8.

48. See Bouloiseau, *Jacobin Republic*, 2–3.

49. Cf. Michael Waller, *The Language of Communism* (London, 1972), 63n; Russell L. Hanson, *The Democratic Imagination in America* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1985), 417–18.

50. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, tr. R. Crawley (New York: Modern Library, 1934), 189–90.

51. See Syme, "History and Language at Rome," 10.

52. Cf. Mario Pei, *The Story of Language*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia, 1965), 246.

53. See Brunot, *Révolution et l'Empire*, 636–45.

54. Ibid., 628.

55. Ibid., 623–29.

56. Ibid., 676–702; R. R. Palmer, *Twelve Who Ruled* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton Paperbacks, 1970), 320–21; Brian Weinstein, *The Civic Tongue* (New York, 1983), 10; Urban T. Holmes, Jr., and Alexander H. Schutz, *A History of the French Language* (New York, 1938), 112.

57. George Orwell, *Coming Up for Air* (New York, n.d.), 87.

58. "Politics and the English Language," 127–40.

59. Ibid., 127–28.

60. Ibid., 130.

61. Ibid., 136.

62. Ibid., 128.

63. Cf. Brian Wicker, "An Analysis of Newspeak," *Blackfriars* 43 (June 1962): 272–85.

64. See, e.g., Noam Chomsky, *Language and Mind*, rev. ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972); Chomsky, *Chomsky: Selected Readings*, ed. J. P. B. Allen and Paul Van Buren (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1971); Danny D. Steinberg, *Psycholinguistics* (London, 1982), 101–20. See also Lewis S. Feuer, "Sociological Aspects of the Relation between Language and Philosophy," in *Theory in Anthropology: A Sourcebook*, ed. Robert A. Manners and David Kaplan (Chicago, 1968), 411–21.

65. George Orwell, "Some Recent Novels," *New English Weekly*, 26 Sept. 1935, 393; "Politics and the English Language," 137–38, 140; "As I Please," 17 March 1944, in *CEJL* 3:108–11; "As I Please," 18 Aug. 1944, in *CEJL* 3:209–10.

66. "Propaganda and Demotic Speech," *CEJL* 3:140.

67. "Charles Dickens," *CEJL* 1:459; Orwell to Humphry House, 11 April 1940, in *CEJL* 1:532.

68. "Propaganda and Demotic Speech," 135.

69. "Politics vs. Literature: An Examination of *Gulliver's Travels*," *CEJL* 4:214.

70. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, 263.

71. See Hanson, *Democratic Imagination in America*, 35–36.

72. Orwell to Francis A. Henson (extract), 16 June 1949, in *CEJL* 4:502.

73. Orwell to Henry Miller, 26 Aug. 1936, in *CEJL* 1:228.

74. "As I Please," 29 Nov. 1946, in *CEJL* 4:249.

75. "As I Please," 3 March 1944, in *CEJL* 3:103. See also "Notes on the Way," *CEJL* 2:15–18; review of *The Edge of the Abyss*, by Alfred Noyes, in *CEJL* 3:99–101; "Looking Back on the Spanish War," *CEJL* 2:265–66.

76. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "Politics and the American Language," *American Scholar* 43 (Autumn 1974): 559–60. On contemporary political discourse, see Paul E. Corcoran, *Political Language and Rhetoric* (Austin, Tex., 1979), esp. 161–62, 168, 174–75.

77. William Lambdin, *Doublespeak Dictionary* (Los Angeles: Pinnacle Books, 1979), 59. See also John Pick, *The Modern Newspeak* (London: Harrap, 1984).

Chapter 1: The World in 1984

1. John Adams, *The Political Writings of John Adams*, ed. George A. Peek, Jr. (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1954), 197.

2. George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (New York, 1949), 206–8, 266–67, 269–70.

3. Ibid., 186–89.

4. Ibid., 189–200.

5. Ibid., 209.

6. James Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, in *Pamphlets of the American Revolution, 1750–1776*, ed. Bernard Bailyn, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, Belknap Press, 1965—), 1:454.

7. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 280.

8. Ibid., 268. See also ibid., 35, 80, 200, 252.
9. See ibid., 8, 194–95, 212, 312.
10. Ibid., 213–14.
11. Ibid., 8, 40–43, 97, 214, 313–14.
12. "The Prevention of Literature," *CEJL* 4:64.
13. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 215–16.
14. Ibid., 59, 198–99, 216.
15. Ibid., 71–72, 84–85, 131–32, 272.
16. See ibid., 206. On the role of intellectuals in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, see Steinhoff, *George Orwell*, 219–22.
17. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 216. See also ibid., 193.
18. Ibid., 193, 212, 216–17.
19. See ibid., 44, 47–48, 184, 245. See also James Connors, "'Do It to Julia': Thoughts on Orwell's *1984*," *Modern Fiction Studies* 16 (Winter 1970–71): 467–68.
20. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 8–10, 112. See also Francis Bacon, "Of Studies," in *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. John M. Robertson (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1905), 797.
21. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 44, 107, 131.
22. Ibid., 154, 267, 299–300.
23. Ibid., 17, 27, 258–59, 267.
24. Ibid., 25–27, 75.
25. Ibid., 3, 24–25, 50, 54, 57–58, 138, 270.
26. "Through a Glass, Rosily," *CEJL* 4:37.
27. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 303.
28. Ibid., 304.
29. Ibid., 311–12.
30. Ibid., 303–4, 312–13. This statement seems to contain a contradiction, for if the concept of political equality no longer exists, it can hardly occur to anyone to purge this meaning from the word *equal*.
31. Ibid., 311. See also ibid., 52, 304.
32. Ibid., 305.
33. Ibid., 304–5.
34. Ibid., 305.
35. Ibid., 305–6.
36. Ibid., 308–9.
37. Ibid., 312–13.
38. Ibid., 306.
39. Ibid., 309.
40. Ibid., 309, 311.
41. Ibid., 309.
42. Ibid., 309–10.
43. Ibid., 54–55, 310–11. See also Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, tr. John H. Moran, in *On the Origin of Language* (New York, 1966), 72–73.
44. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 311.

45. Ibid., 53.

46. Ibid., 314. See also ibid., 53–54, 234, 313–14. In spite of the difficulties involved, Anthony Burgess has attempted a Newspeak translation of the Declaration, with the following less-than-satisfactory result: "We say that truth writed is truth unwrited, that all mans are the same as each other, that their fathers and mothers maked them so that they are alive, free from all diseases and following not food but the feeling of having eated food. They are maked like this by their parents but Big Brother makes them like this. Big Brother cannot be killed but he is to be killed, and in his place there will be himself." Burgess, *1985* (Boston, 1978), 41.

47. Ezra Pound, "How to Read," in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T. S. Eliot (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1954), 23.

48. "A Defence of Poetry," in *The Complete Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, 10 vols. (London: Ernest Benn, 1965), 7:117.

49. Steinhoff, *George Orwell*, 166.

50. Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, tr. Thomas P. Whitney and Harry Willetts, 3 vols. (New York, 1973–78), 1:17. See also *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 53.

51. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, tr. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness (London, 1961), 115.

52. See *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 80, 267–68.

53. Ibid., 211.

54. Ibid., 58. See also Roberta Kalechofsky, *George Orwell* (New York, 1973), 114.

55. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 23, 26, 42, 57.

56. Ibid., 103. See also Kalechofsky, *George Orwell*, 131.

57. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 271.

58. See Johann Köberl, "Der Sprachphilosophische Hintergrund von Newspeak," *Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 4 (1979): 174.

59. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 160, 303–4, 312. See also "Politics and the English Language," 138–39. Cf. Bolton, *Language of 1984*, 35; Elizabeth Closs Traugott, "Newspeak: Could It Really Work?" in *On* Nineteen Eighty-Four, ed. Peter Stansky (New York, 1983), 100.

60. Michael Walzer, "On 'Failed Totalitarianism,'" in *1984 Revisited*, ed. Irving Howe (New York, 1983), 117.

Chapter 2: "He Who Thinks Has Already Doubted"

1. See, e.g., Groth, "'Isms' in Totalitarianism."

2. On the equation of fascism with communism in East Europe and the Soviet Union, see "Communists in Prague Threatened with Ban," *New York Times*, 18 April 1990, national edition; Serge Schmemann, "East Berlin Faults Opposition on Raid," ibid., 17 Jan. 1990; Bill Keller, "Gorbachev Jeered at May Day Rally," ibid., 2 May 1990. On Hitler and the Bolshe-

viks, see Hermann Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction* (New York, 1940), 131; Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 309–10, 309n, 317n.

3. Groth, "'Isms' in Totalitarianism," 294.

4. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston, 1939), 493–94. In this as in other instances, I have checked the English translation against the 21st German edition of *Mein Kampf*, published in Munich in 1933.

5. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 279, 282. See also ibid., 133, 175, 186–89, 223–24, 232–33, 246, 280. Because of the difficulty of verifying these purportedly near-verbatim accounts of conversations with Hitler, Rauschning remains a controversial historical source. Yet these reminiscences were used as evidence in the Nuremberg trial, and today they are generally considered to be at least substantively accurate. On Rauschning's reliability, see Theodor Schieder, *Hermann Rauschnings* Gespräche mit Hitler *als Geschichtsquelle* (Opladen, 1972); J. S. Conway, "Hermann Rauschning as Historian and Opponent of Nazism," *Canadian Journal of History* 8 (March 1973): 67–78; George Watson, "Orwell's Nazi Renegade," *Sewanee Review* 94 (July-Sept. 1986): 486–95.

6. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 224.

7. Ibid., 212. For excellent descriptions of Nazi mass meetings, see William Carr, *Hitler* (New York, 1979), 3–5; J. P. Stern, *Hitler: The Führer and the People* (Berkeley, Calif., 1975), 35–42, 86–91; Joachim C. Fest, *Hitler*, tr. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York, 1974), 149–53, 253–54, 323–32, 512–17; Henry M. Pachter, "National-Socialist and Fascist Propaganda for the Conquest of Power," in International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, *The Third Reich* (New York, 1975), 712–15. Cf. Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, tr. James Strachey (London, 1922), esp. 9–10.

8. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 615. See also ibid., 612–23.

9. Quoted in Richard Grunberger, *A Social History of the Third Reich* (London, 1971), 308.

10. Ibid. On education in the Third Reich, see ibid., 285–323; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship*, tr. Jean Steinberg (New York, 1970), 259–72; William Ebenstein, *The Nazi State* (New York, 1943), 147–98.

11. Quoted in John H. E. Fried, "Fascist Militarisation and Education for War," in International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, *Third Reich*, 769.

12. Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Secret Conversations*, tr. Norman Cameron and R. H. Stevens (New York, 1953), 288. See also ibid., 13, 57, 343. For more on Hitler's plans for postwar East Europe, see Albert Speer, *Infiltration*, tr. Joachim Neugroschel (New York, 1981), 301–5.

13. Quoted in Werner Maser, *Hitler's Mein Kampf*, tr. R. H. Barry (London, 1970), 120.

14. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 41.

15. Ibid., 43.

16. Cornelia Berning, *Vom "Abstammungsnachweis" zum "Zuchtwart": Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, 1964), 181.

17. Karl O. Paetel, "The Reign of the Black Order: The Final Phase of National-Socialism: The SS Counter-State," in International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, *Third Reich*, 657. See also Eugen Kogon, *The Theory and Practice of Hell*, tr. Heinz Norden (New York, 1950; rpt. New York, 1973), 267.

18. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 186.

19. Bracher, *German Dictatorship*, 249–50 (but see also the contradictory evidence on 254); Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's "Weltanschauung,"* tr. Herbert Arnold (Middletown, Conn., 1972); Fest, *Hitler*, esp. 205–6. For the other side of this debate, see Hermann Rauschning, *The Revolution of Nihilism* (New York, 1939); Michael Curtis, "Retreat from Totalitarianism," in Friedrich, Curtis, and Barber, *Totalitarianism in Perspective*, 63–66.

20. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 232. On the elasticity of the Nazi definition of race (*Rasse*), see Heinz Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch* (New York, 1944), 120–21.

21. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 232.

22. Quoted in Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, rev. ed. (New York, 1964), 405. For Hitler's utilitarian attitude toward the National Socialist *Weltanschauung*, see *Mein Kampf*, 220–23, 365–66, 676–83; Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 189; Rauschning, *Revolution of Nihilism*, 20–21, 24. He was less interested in the truth of its teachings than in its power to stir the masses to fanatical action in behalf of his movement; and it could only stir them to action if, like Catholic dogma through the ages, it was accepted as an absolute, unchanging creed. Cf. Aryeh L. Unger, *The Totalitarian Party* (London, 1974), 37–43; Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda*, tr. Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (New York, 1965), 197–98.

23. Cf. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 209; Victor Klemperer, *LTI* (Berlin, 1947), 152.

24. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 678, 681.

25. Quoted in Michael H. Kater, *Studentenschaft und Rechtsradikalismus in Deutschland, 1918–1933* (Hamburg, 1975), 184.

26. Louis P. Lochner, Introduction to Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, ed. and tr. Louis P. Lochner (Garden City, N.Y., 1948), 13–14.

27. On the Propaganda Ministry and political control of culture, see ibid., 14; Robert Edwin Herzstein, *The War That Hitler Won* (New York, 1978), 123–24, 134, 171; Ernest K. Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda, 1925–1945* (East Lansing, Mich., 1965), 61–123.

28. Quoted in Wolfgang Bergsdorf, "Die Sprache der Diktatur und ihre Wörter," in *Wörter als Waffen*, ed. Wolfgang Bergsdorf (Stuttgart, 1979), 126n.

29. For Goebbels's views on propaganda and language, see Joseph Goebbels, *The Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, ed. Willi A. Boelcke, tr. Ewald Osers (New York, 1970), xvii, 29, 293; *Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, 56. On Goebbels's skill as a coiner of new words and vivid phrases, as well as his ability to pervert the meanings of words and to tell convincing half-

truths, see Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*, 193–95. On his importance as a shaper of National Socialist language, see Cornelia Berning, "Die Sprache des Nationalsozialismus," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung* 19 (1963): 92–93 (hereafter cited as "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III"). For Hitler's views on propaganda, see *Mein Kampf*, 227–40, 474–77. Cf. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 210–11.

30. Cf. Bergsdorf, "Sprache der Diktatur," 103–4; Siegfried Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache* (Berne, 1970), 103.

Chapter 3: Features of a "Fanatical" Language

1. On emotive and antirational language, see Werner Betz, "The National-Socialist Vocabulary," in International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, *Third Reich*, 791; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 59; Cornelia Berning, "Die Sprache des Nationalsozialismus," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung* 17 (1961): 178–79 (hereafter cited as "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I"). See also James M. Rhodes, *The Hitler Movement* (Stanford, Calif., 1980), 112–13; Bullock, *Hitler*, 401–2.

2. On archaic expressions, see R. E. Keller, *The German Language* (London, 1978), 604–5; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 69–70; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 180.

3. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 180. See also Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 68, 71; Hermann Rauschning, *Men of Chaos* (New York, 1942), 34.

4. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 468. See also ibid., 570. Cf. Eugen Hadamovsky, *Propaganda and National Power*, tr. Alice Mavrogordato and Ilse De Witt (Urbana, Ill., 1954; rpt. New York, 1972), 160–62 (originally published in Oldenburg, Germany, in 1933); Rhodes, *Hitler Movement*, 167.

5. Pope Pius XI, *The Church in Germany* (Washington, D.C., 1937), 19.

6. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 500, 932, 964. See also Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 85; Klemperer, *LTI*, 121. Kenneth Burke has written: "The patterns of Hitler's thought are a bastardized or caricatured version of religious thought." *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, 3d ed. (Berkeley, Calif., 1973), 199.

7. These examples appear in N. Gangulee, ed., *The Mind and Face of Nazi Germany* (London, 1942), 55; Fest, *Hitler*, 328; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 174.

8. Adolf Hitler, speech at Anniversary Celebration of the year 1934, in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler*, ed. Norman H. Baynes, 2 vols. (London, 1942), 1:159. See also Klemperer, *LTI*, 116–17.

9. Klemperer, *LTI*, 118. The term *Drittes* (Third) *Reich* has a long history in Christian theology and millenarian thought. Eventually the German press was prohibited from using the term, possibly because of Party concern about underground whisperings regarding a *Vierten* (Fourth) *Reich*. See Berning,

Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus, 55–58. See also Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 789.

10. Hanns Kerrl, quoted in Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 1; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 176.

11. Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 2. The German original of this statement appeared in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, 26 Feb. 1941, South German edition.

12. Rudolf Hess, quoted in Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 1; Robert Ley, quoted in Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 80. Note also the Old Testament flavor of the following lines from Alice Försterling's "Braunau," one of the poems in her *Hitler-Gedichte*, published in Berlin in 1933:

> *Du Braunau, Gott hat dich erlesen,*
> *Durch dich wurde er uns geschenkt . . . .*
> *[Thou, Braunau, God hath chosen thee,*
> *Through thee wast he given to us . . . .]*

The poem is reprinted in *Literatur und Dichtung im Dritten Reich*, ed. Joseph Wulf (Gütersloh, 1963), 105.

13. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 40; Klemperer, *LTI*, 118; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 175.

14. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 49; *Hitler's Secret Conversations*, 117.

15. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 84. In this as in several other quotations from *Mein Kampf*, I have dropped the frequent italics of the original.

16. See Klemperer, *LTI*, 114–16. See also Marlis G. Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, ed. and tr. Thomas E. J. De Witt (Athens, Ohio, 1977), 267, 303, 325n-26n.

17. *Hitler's Secret Conversations*, 289–91; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 95–96.

18. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 96–97; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 181; Eugen Seidel and Ingeborg Seidel-Slotty, *Sprachwandel im Dritten Reich* (Halle, 1961), 124.

19. See Klemperer, *LTI*, 267; Jost Trier, "Alltagssprache," in G. Patzig et al., *Die deutsche Sprache im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1966), 130–32. The *Völkischer Beobachter* of 27 Aug. 1939 admitted: "The foreign word impresses, and the less it is understood the more it impresses . . .—it even drowns thought." Quoted in Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 96.

20. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 182; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 19.

21. For these and other examples, see Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 792–93; Hitler, *Speeches* 1:145–46, 187, 292.

22. Quoted in Bracher, *German Dictatorship*, 147. Describing the NSDAP as a *junge Bewegung* (young movement) and as the *Partei der Jungen* (party of the young), the Nazis proclaimed themselves champions of "the

new, the young Germany" who stood at the head of the *Front der Jugend* (Youth Front) in the *Kampf der Generationen* (struggle between generations). Willi Münzenberg, *Propaganda als Waffe* (Paris, 1937), 98. See also Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 27.

23. Hitler, *Speeches* 1:92.

24. Cf. Goebbels's stated reasons for launching a propaganda paper: "It was not our goal to be informative but to encourage, stimulate, and incite our readers. The organ we founded was meant to act as a whip, so to speak, which would rouse the tardy sleepers from their slumber to drive them onward to untiring action. The motto of the paper was itself a program like its name (*Der Angriff*—The Attack). Next to its title there was printed in big letters the following challenge: 'For the Opressed [*sic*]! Against the Exploiter!' These lines in themselves expressed the combatant spirit of our new organs." Quoted in Hadamovsky, *Propaganda and National Power*, 136–37. Cf. Rhodes, *Hitler Movement*, 79, 166–67.

25. Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 111.

26. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 985. See also ibid., 206, 392, 396, 403.

27. Kogon, *Theory and Practice of Hell*, 16n; Henry Friedlander, "The Manipulation of Language," in *The Holocaust: Ideology, Bureaucracy, and Genocide*, ed. Henry Friedlander and Sybil Milton (Millwood, N.Y., 1980), 103–4.

28. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 51, 799. On Hitler's passion for superlatives, see Fest, *Hitler*, 126.

29. Hitler, proclamation of 15 April 1945 (probably composed by Goebbels), quoted in Curt Riess, *Joseph Goebbels* (Garden City, N.Y., 1948), 328; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 557, reprinting Nazi propaganda poster.

30. For these and other examples, see Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 42–45.

31. Hitler, speech of 6 Oct. 1936, in *Speeches* 1:682; Goebbels, quoted in Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 55.

32. These examples are cited in Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 43–44, 57; Klemperer, *LTI*, 232; Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 104.

33. For these examples, see Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 104; Klemperer, *LTI*, 233; Bracher, *German Dictatorship*, 256; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 42, 57.

34. On "total," see Klemperer, *LTI*, 37, 231; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 183; Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 104. See also Joseph Stalin, *War Speeches* (London, 1946), 106; Joseph Goebbels, *Goebbels-Reden*, ed. Helmut Heiber, 2 vols. (Düsseldorf, 1972), 2:205. Note also the uses of "total" in Walther Hofer, ed., *Der Nationalsozialismus: Dokumente, 1933–1945* (Frankfurt am Main, 1957), 82–84, 89–90, 102–3.

35. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III," 105; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 45. Cf. Hadamovsky, *Propaganda and National Power*, 53–54.

36. Goebbels, *Kampf um Berlin* (1934), quoted in Lochner, Introduction to *Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, 13; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 708, 784. On the etymology of *Menschenmaterial*, see Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozia-*

lismus, 130–33. The contempt for the masses implied in Nazi and Fascist "material" metaphors was made explicit by Benito Mussolini: "When the masses are like wax in my hands, when I stir their faith, or when I mingle with them and am almost crushed by them, I feel myself to be a part of them. All the same there persists in me a certain feeling of aversion, like that which the modeller feels for the clay he is moulding. Does not the sculptor sometimes smash his block of marble into fragments, because he cannot shape it into the vision he has conceived?" Quoted in Stern, *Hitler*, 45.

37. Cornelia Berning, "Die Sprache des Nationalsozialismus," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Wortforschung* 18 (1962): 111 (hereafter cited as "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II"). See also Claus Mueller, *The Politics of Communication* (New York, 1973), 29; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 17–19; Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 108; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 405.

38. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 183; Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 124. For examples, see Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 171–72, 397–98, 410, where *Träger* is usually translated "bearer."

39. Quoted in Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 132.

40. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 645.

41. Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 124; *Goebbels-Diaries, 1942–43*, 62. For Hitler's use of the storage-battery metaphor, see Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 111–12.

42. Kogon, *Theory and Practice of Hell*, 191; Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 58; *Goebbels-Reden* 2:183.

43. Shaul Esh, "Words and Their Meanings," *Yad Vashem Studies* 5 (1963): 161–63; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 186–87.

44. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 40; George Steiner, "The Hollow Miracle," *Reporter*, 18 Feb. 1960, 38; Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 107.

45. Esh, "Words and Their Meanings," 152. See also Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 107–8; Joseph Wulf, *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder* (Gütersloh, 1963), 19.

46. Fest, *Hitler*, 212; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 160, 419.

47. *Goebbels-Reden* 2:183; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 40.

48. Blumenthal, "On the Nazi Vocabulary," *Yad Washem Studies* 1 (1957): 56; Kogon, *Theory and Practice of Hell*, 220, 269.

49. Rudolf Hoess, quoted in Esh, "Words and Their Meanings," 153; Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (New York, 1978), vol. 1, *Thinking*, 4.

50. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 469; Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 83.

51. Cf. Rauschning, *Revolution of Nihilism*, 27–28.

52. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 32.

53. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 396, 503, 721, 763.

54. Cf. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 31; Fried, "Fascist Militarisation," 764–65.

55. For these instances of militarized expression, see Pachter, "National-Socialist and Fascist Propaganda," 723; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 20; Eugen Hartmuth Mueller, "The German Language of Today," *German*

Quarterly 25 (Jan. 1952): 38. On *ausrichten*, see also Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 32.

56. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 22. On *Kampf* as a Nazi catchword, see Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III," 103–4; Wendula Dahle, *Der Einsatz einer Wissenschaft* (Bonn, 1969), 30–37. Cf. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 948.

57. On *Front*, see Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 20; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 102; Bergsdorf, "Sprache der Diktatur," 110; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III," 104.

58. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), 25.

59. On *Schlacht*, see Bergsdorf, "Sprache der Diktatur," 110; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 20; Pachter, "National-Socialist and Fascist Propaganda," 722; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 21; Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 31.

60. *Völkischer Beobachter*, 25 Sept. 1933, quoted in Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 20; V. Lutze in *Das Reich*, 2 June 1940, quoted in Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 129; Goebbels, speech of 21 April 1934, quoted in Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III," 104. See also Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 792.

61. Quoted in Rauschning, *Revolution of Nihilism*, 48. Cf. Detlev J. K. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, tr. Richard Deveson (New Haven, 1987), 36.

62. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 152–53.

63. Ibid., 153. Cf. Ellul, *Propaganda*, 205; Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 367, 380–81.

64. On *System*, see Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 179–81; Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 106. See also Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 195–96, 455.

65. Franz Six, *Die politische Propaganda der NSDAP im Kampf um die Macht* (Heidelberg, 1936), quoted in Haig A. Bosmajian, "The Magic Word in Nazi Persuasion," *Etc.* 23 (March 1966): 15.

66. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 874. See also ibid., 432, 840, 894, 910n; Klemperer, *LTI*, 186–87, 279; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 38–39. *Wer Jude ist, bestimme ich!*, Goering declared—"I decide who is a Jew!" Quoted in editor's note in Hofer, *Nationalsozialismus: Dokumente*, 271.

67. Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 50. On "plutocracy," see *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 17, 176, 201–2, 242; Rolf Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg der nationalsozialistischen Sprachlenkung," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Sprache* 22 (1966): 62 (hereafter cited as "Erfolg und Mißerfolg I").

68. Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 105; Pachter, "National-Socialist and Fascist Propaganda," 736; *Goebbels-Reden* 2:82.

69. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 599, 991.

70. For these epithets, see Friedlander, "Manipulation of Language," 105; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 800.

71. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 104, 779, 799, 894, 988. See also Pachter, "National-Socialist and Fascist Propaganda," 727.

72. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 75, 427, 619, 931; *Völkischer Beobachter*, 1 March 1939 and 17 April 1943, quoted in Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 38.

73. Klemperer, *LTI*, 78–79; Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 988. See also Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 795.

74. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 123, 136, 232, 331, 405, 930.

75. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 32, 36.

76. On psychological projection and the creation of public scapegoats by totalitarian propaganda, see Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (New York, 1972), 57–58; Harold D. Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How* (New York, 1958), 38, 42–45.

77. *Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, 166, 168.

78. Ibid., 533.

79. All of these and many similar expressions appear in the second volume of Hitler, *Speeches*. In a secret address to German journalists in November 1938, Hitler explained part of the rationale behind his olive-branch rhetoric: "For decades circumstances have compelled me to speak only of peace. Only by stressing that the German people wished to continue in peace and had peaceful intentions, was it possible for me gradually to win freedom for this people and to obtain for it the armaments required for the next step forward." Quoted in Maser, *Hitler's Mein Kampf*, 123. Even though Hitler dismissed the League of Nations as corrupt and at cross-purposes with German interests, he confided to Hermann Rauschning soon after Germany withdrew from the League in October 1933 that he would now talk even more emphatically the language of the League: "And my party comrades will not fail to understand me when they hear me speak of universal peace, disarmament and mutual security pacts!" Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 111. At about the same time, Goebbels issued secret instructions to his propaganda attachés in German embassies: "To the outside world all our propaganda must underline impressively that Germany does not wish for anything but a peaceful settlement of all pending problems. . . . In a skillful way all those who have refused to accede to Germany's rightful demands must be blamed for the failure of a peaceful understanding. . . . This must be done unobtrusively and in a constantly varying manner. . . . We must persuade at least part of public opinion abroad that Germany has no other way than to take what is absolutely coming to her." Quoted in Riess, *Joseph Goebbels*, 116. See also *Secret Conversations with Hitler*, ed. Edouard Calic, tr. Richard Barry (New York, 1971), 42.

80. Cf. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 113.

81. J. S. Conway, *The Nazi Persecution of the Churches, 1933–1945* (New York, 1968), 210.

82. Klemperer, *LTI*, 41.

83. Viktor Reimann, *Goebbels*, tr. Stephen Wendt (Garden City, N.Y., 1976), 234.

84. For an early exposition on the real meaning of "protective custody" under Nazi rule, see Karl Kraus, *In These Great Times*, ed. Harry Zohn (Montreal, 1976), 105–14 (an excerpt from Kraus's *Die Dritte Walpurgis-*

nacht, published in 1933). See also Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 54–55.

85. Klemperer, *LTI*, 150; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 171.

86. Gerhard F. Kramer, "The Influence of National-Socialism on the Courts of Justice and the Police," in International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, *Third Reich*, 628.

87. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 36–37; Bergsdorf, "Sprache der Diktatur," 109; Rolf Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg der nationalsozialistischen Sprachlenkung," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Sprache* 23 (1967): 86 (hereafter cited as "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II"); Wulf, *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder*, 67; Esh, "Words and Their Meanings," 159.

88. Kogon, *Theory and Practice of Hell*, 32, 93, 107; Blumenthal, "On the Nazi Vocabulary," 60–61.

89. On death-camp euphemisms, see Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 140–41; Blumenthal, "On the Nazi Vocabulary," 55, 63; Wulf, *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder*, 23; Mueller, "German Language of Today," 39.

90. Bullock, *Hitler*, 572; Nachman Blumental, "From the Nazi Vocabulary," *Yad Vashem Studies* 6 (1967): 69–70.

91. Wulf, *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder*, 10; Klemperer, *LTI*, 159.

92. Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 795–96.

93. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *Art under a Dictatorship* (New York, 1954), 155.

94. See, e.g., editor's notes in *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 196, 295.

95. Herzstein, *War That Hitler Won*, 424–25; *Völkischer Beobachter*, 19 Feb. 1943, quoted in Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 87.

96. For these examples, see Klemperer, *LTI*, 240; Alexander L. George, *Propaganda Analysis* (Evanston, Ill., 1959; rpt. Westport, Conn., 1973), 241–42; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 87; Rolf Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg der nationalsozialistischen Sprachlenkung," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Sprache* 27 (1971): 180 (hereafter cited as "Erfolg und Mißerfolg VI").

97. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 175.

98. See Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 227.

99. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 97.

Chapter 4: "Synchronizing" the Dictionary

1. Stokely Carmichael, quoted in Haig A. Bosmajian, *The Language of Oppression* (Washington, D.C., 1974), 6.

2. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 6.

3. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 116–17, 478. See also ibid., 111–18.

4. Quoted in Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 12.

5. Quoted in ibid., 114.

6. Quoted in Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 113, and in Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 124.

7. Hitler, speech in 1930, excerpted in Hofer, *Nationalsozialismus: Dokumente*, 28.

8. Ley, speech of 2 May 1933, excerpted in ibid., 60. The "freedom" Hitler offered men was freedom from freedom, freedom from thought, and freedom from moral responsibility. "Providence," he declared, "has ordained that I should be the greatest liberator of humanity. I am freeing men from the restraints of an intelligence that has taken charge; from the dirty and degrading self-mortifications of a chimera called conscience and morality, and from the demands of a freedom and personal independence which only a very few can bear." Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 225.

9. "Kampflied der SA," in *Literatur und Dichtung im Dritten Reich*, 391.

10. See Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 123, 479. See also ibid., 661, 661n, 668–69.

11. Quoted in Gangulee, *Mind and Face of Nazi Germany*, 3.

12. On "worker" and "solidarity," see Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus I," 179; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 174. The Communist opposition complained bitterly about the debasement of the socialist vocabulary. See, e.g., Münzenberg, *Propaganda als Waffe*, 150–54. On the history of "solidarity" as an ideological catchword shouted by socialists and liberals alike, see Lewis S. Feuer, *Ideology and the Ideologists* (New York, 1975), 137–38.

13. Cf. Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*, 119; Franz Alfred Six, *Das Reich und Europa* (Berlin, 1943), excerpted in *Das Dritte Reich und seine Denker*, ed. Léon Poliakov and Josef Wulf (Munich, 1978), 380.

14. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 168. See also Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 191.

15. Rolf Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg der nationalsozialistischen Sprachlenkung," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Sprache* 26 (1970): 176 (hereafter cited as "Erfolg und Mißerfolg V").

16. On these words, see Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 167–68; Fritz Morstein Marx, "State Propaganda in Germany," in *Propaganda and Dictatorship*, ed. Harwood Lawrence Childs (Princeton, N.J., 1936), 18–19; Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II," 108. See also Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 90–91, 233.

17. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 60.

18. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III," 104.

19. See Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 164, 166. See also *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 255–56; Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 27; Friedrich Jess, "Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes" (Munich, 1934), excerpted in *Dritte Reich und seine Denker*, 398; Dahle, *Einsatz einer Wissenschaft*, 31.

20. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 17, 112–13. See also ibid., 33, 41, 99–101, 186.

21. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 168; Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II," 100.

22. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 74–75. Long before Hitler, Bakunin described himself as "a fanatic lover of liberty." Dallmayr, *Language and Politics*, 83.

23. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 75. See also Klemperer, *LTI*, 65; Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 785–86. Cf. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 486–87, 798.

24. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 171.

25. See Goebbels's broadcast address to the German nation after the coup attempt, reprinted in Rudolf Semmler, *Goebbels: The Man Next to Hitler* (London, 1947; rpt. New York, 1981), 200.

26. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 396 (German ed., 316). See also Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 48.

27. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 45–46, 71–72.

28. Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II," 89.

29. Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 133.

30. Ibid., 106–7.

31. Ibid., 101.

32. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 445, 449. See also Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 25; Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 50.

33. *Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, 80–81.

34. Although using it in a somewhat more restrictive sense than he, I have borrowed the term "logocide" from Robert S. Byfield, *The Fifth Weapon* (New York, 1954), 35–37.

35. Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg V," 178; Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 359–60, 359n. Cf. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 42, 231–32. The Nazis made a sharp distinction between *Volk* and *Nation*, a distinction implicit in the second point of the twenty-five-point program of the NSDAP: "We demand equality of rights for the German folk [*Volkes*] in relation to the other nations [*Nationen*], abrogation of the peace treaties of Versailles and St. Germain." Hofer, *Nationalsozialismus: Dokumente*, 28.

36. Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II," 178–79; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 160–61; Mueller, *Politics of Communication*, 30. For further extensive treatment of the *Sprachregelungen*, see *Dritte Reich und seine Denker*, 445–50; Helmut Sündermann, *Tagesparolen* (Leoni am Starnberger See, 1973); Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*, 76–79, 88–123.

37. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 161–62.

38. Ibid., 163.

39. Ibid., 164.

40. *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 286–87.

41. Quoted in Leonard W. Doob, "Goebbels' Principles of Propaganda," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 14 (Fall 1950): 437.

42. Herzstein, *War That Hitler Won*, 391.

43. *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 24. See also Herzstein, *War That Hitler Won*, 380.

44. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 166.

45. *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 300; Rolf Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg der nationalsozialistischen Sprachlenkung," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Sprache* 25 (1969): 128. See also Berning, "Sprache des National-

sozialismus II," 165; *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 131–38; Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II," 95–96; Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg VI," 116, 120–21.

46. Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 163, 165.

47. *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 289.

48. See Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 717–49, esp. 721, 737.

49. Semmler, *Goebbels*, 22. See also ibid., 23; *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 280–81; Z. A. B. Zeman, *Nazi Propaganda* (London, 1964), 24; Riess, *Joseph Goebbels*, 180.

Chapter 5: The Nature of Nazi Language

1. Wolfgang Werner Sauer, *Der Sprachgebrauch von Nationalsozialisten vor 1933* (Hamburg, 1978).

2. Cf. Rauschning, *Revolution of Nihilism*, 30–31.

3. Hitler, address to the German Labor Front at Nuremberg Party Congress, 12 Sept. 1936, in *Speeches* 1:930. On the NSDAP as a *Volkspartei*, see Fred Weinstein, *The Dynamics of Nazism* (New York, 1980), esp. 27–29, 47–51, 59–60, 69–70; Paetel, "Reign of the Black Order," 636, 642; Rauschning, *Revolution of Nihilism*, 50–52; Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 35.

4. See Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus II," 112–13; Betz, "National-Socialist Vocabulary," 786–87.

5. Joseph Goebbels, *The Goebbels Diaries, 1939–1941*, tr. and ed. Fred Taylor (New York, 1983), 84. Cf. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 239.

6. Klemperer, *LTI*, 269–70. See also Fest, *Hitler*, 425, quoting Goebbels. "If I talk in the provinces," Goebbels explained, "then I talk in a manner different from that in Berlin, and, if I address people in Bayreuth then I talk of other things than in the Pharus Hall [i.e., the slums of North Berlin]." "It is all a matter of practice and not of theory." Quoted in Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*, 28.

7. Cf. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 13; Berning, "Sprache des Nationalsozialismus III," 92–93.

8. An example of bombast, and not the worst by any means: "The depth of the fall of a body is always the measure for the distance of its momentary situation from the one it had originally. The same may also be said of the fall of nations and States." Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 302. On the style of *Mein Kampf*, see Maser, *Hitler's Mein Kampf*, 36–57. In 1940 George Orwell wrote for the *New English Weekly* an unusually perceptive review of Hitler's book. Without question *Mein Kampf* supplied him with primary source material for *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. See *CEJL* 2:12–14.

9. *Secret Conferences of Dr. Goebbels*, 24n.

10. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 65, 232.

11. Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*, 25. Cf. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 467–68.

12. See, e.g., Frederick Elmore Lumley, *Means of Social Control* (New

York, 1925), esp. 169–76, 182; Hertzler, *Sociology of Language*, esp. 295–97; William Albig, *Modern Public Opinion* (New York, 1956), 103–5.

13. Bork, *Mißbrauch der Sprache*, 51.

14. Hertzler, *Sociology of Language*, 295.

15. Quoted in Ladislas Farago, ed., *German Psychological Warfare* (New York, 1942; rpt. New York, 1972), 162.

16. Hadamovsky, *Propaganda and National Power*, 5–6. See also Bosmajian, *Language of Oppression*, 18; Lumley, *Means of Social Control*, 159.

17. Hadamovsky, *Propaganda and National Power*, 7.

18. Ibid., 1.

19. Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd* (New York, 1969), 31. See also ibid., 24–28, 35.

20. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, tr. James Strachey (New York, 1950), 161.

21. Quoted in Grunberger, *Social History of the Third Reich*, 328.

22. *Goebbels-Reden* 2:448–49, 453.

Chapter 6: The Problem of a "Communist Language"

1. Mueller, *Politics of Communication*, 35.

2. For new Soviet thinking on "democracy," see Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika* (London, 1987), 31–32, 76, 123.

3. See, e.g., Gorbachev's report to the Twenty-seventh Congress of the CPSU, 25 Feb. 1986, in M. S. Gorbachov [*sic*], *Speeches and Writings* (Oxford, 1986), 93. Cf. Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 76.

4. Gorbachev, quoted in James M. Markham, "Gorbachev Says Change Will Sweep Bloc," *New York Times*, 6 July 1989, national edition.

5. *The Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, new ed. (Moscow, 1986), 59. On "restructuring" and "openness" see Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, esp. 34, 45, 48, 75, 78, 124, 131; Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 3–4, 24, 66–67, 89–90, 147–48. Although in the Western press *glasnost* is usually translated "openness," the term "publicity" probably gives a better idea of what Gorbachev had in mind when calling for "greater *glasnost*." See Bill Keller, "Glasnost (Glas' nust) N. 1. Publicity 2. Openness," *New York Times*, 11 Dec. 1987, national edition.

6. See Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 3, 5; Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 168.

7. Cf. Francis X. Clines, "Gorbachev Aide Warns of Rightist Reaction Ahead," *New York Times*, Sunday, 18 June 1989, sec. 1, late edition.

8. See Bill Keller, "Gorbachev Takes New Post and Pledges to Speed Move toward a Market Economy," *New York Times*, 16 March 1990, national edition.

9. Keller, *German Language*, 608; Max K. Adler, *Marxist Linguistic Theory and Communist Practice* (Hamburg, 1980), 134, 141; Ernst G.

Riemschneider, *Veränderungen der deutschen Sprache in der sowjetisch besetzten Zone Deutschlands seit 1945* (Düsseldorf, 1963), 7. Cf. Uriel Weinreich, "The Russification of Soviet Minority Languages," *Problems of Communism* 2, no. 6 (1953): 46–57; Robert Bathurst, "On Soviet Linguistics: Expropriating Utopia," in *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (Lexington, Mass., 1987), 93, 114–15.

10. Mao Tse-tung, *On New Democracy; Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art; On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People; Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work* (Peking, 1967), 178. See also Stefan T. Possony, Preface to Roy Colby, *A Communese-English Dictionary* (Boston, 1972), vii, x-xi; Waller, *Language of Communism*, 7–9.

11. Harold D. Lasswell and Nathan Leites, *Language of Politics* (Cambridge, Mass., 1949), 242, 245.

12. This refers, of course, to "public" speech. In private, orthodox Communists are quite capable of spontaneity of expression. It is almost as if they speak two different languages, one official and stilted, the other personal and "natural." See Dusko Doder, "Fit-Looking Leader Jokes in Inner Sanctum," *Washington Post*, 17 Oct. 1984, final edition. For Lenin's views on "revolutionary phrase-making" and mindless repetition of slogans and catchwords, see Lenin to Inessa Armand, c. 31 Dec. 1913, in V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 45 vols. (London, 1960–70), 35:131; Lenin, "On Slogans," ibid., 25:183–90; Lenin, "The Revolutionary Phrase," ibid., 27:19–29.

13. Lenin, "The New Economic Policy and the Tactics of the Political Education Departments," *Collected Works* 33:78. Cf. Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 60. See also the comments on the function of popular education in socialist society in *A Dictionary of Scientific Communism* (Moscow, 1984), s.v. "Communist Culture."

14. On the Comintern as a means of manipulating the various Communist parties and their leaders, see Roy C. Macridis, *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, 4th ed. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman/Little, Brown, 1989), 148–50. See also the discussion on proletarian internationalism in Boris Meissner, *The Brezhnev Doctrine* (Kansas City, Mo., 1970), 10–16.

15. Communists, of course, never called this a perversion. They preferred to say that Stalin or Mao or the collective leadership had "enriched" or "creatively developed" the teachings, "raised them to a new level," or else "adapted" people's thinking "to new conditions." Moreover, any action or policy that appeared to contradict the fundamental teachings—an abandonment of the goal of immediate world revolution, say, or an alliance with imperialist countries—could be explained away as a temporary and tactical maneuver or a further unfolding of the historical dialectic rather than a betrayal of ideological principles.

16. Quoted in Stefan T. Possony, *The Revolution of Madness* (Taipei, 1971), 25. See also Mao, *On New Democracy*, 79; Gabriel A. Almond, *The Appeals of Communism* (Princeton, N.J., 1954), 33–37, 113–14.

17. Mao Tse-tung, *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-tung*, ed. Stuart R. Schram (New York, 1968), 80. See also Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 52–53, 83, 139, 167–68, 396–97.

Chapter 7: Language and Ideology

1. On ideology, power, and legitimacy, see Olivier Reboul, *Langage et idéologie* (Paris, 1980), esp. 196–222; Schapiro, *Totalitarianism*, 55–56. On the question of whether Soviet officialdom really believes in Marxism-Leninism, see the conflicting evidence in Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow* (New York, 1985), esp. 23–25, 203, 250–52. Cf. Milovan Djilas, "The Disintegration of Leninist Totalitarianism," in *1984 Revisited*, 140; Robert Conquest, "Ideology and Deception," in *Soviet Strategic Deception*, 119–31.

2. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 336.

3. Constitution of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, pt. 1, in *Materials for the Study of the Soviet System*, ed. James H. Meisel and Edward S. Kozera, 2d ed., rev. (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1953), 154. See also ibid., 153.

4. Quoted in S. Kovalev, "Sovereignty and the Internationalist Obligations of Socialist Countries," *Pravda*, 26 Sept. 1968, reprinted in Meissner, *Brezhnev Doctrine*, 51.

5. Fidel Castro, *Fidel Castro Speeches* (New York, 1981), 88.

6. See *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course* (New York, 1939; rpt. Westport, Conn., 1975), 210. See also ibid., 214, 250.

7. For the expressions quoted here, see Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," *Collected Works* 28:267, 325; D. Z. Manuilsky, "The Results of Socialist Construction in the U.S.S.R.," 9, in *Report of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International* (London, 1936) (a collection of separately paginated pamphlets); *History of the Communist Party*, 290; Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism: An Infantile Disorder," *Collected Works* 31:28; I. Anisimov, "Enemies of Mankind," *Pravda*, 12 May 1950, in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (hereafter cited as *CDSP*), 1 July 1950, 15.

8. Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 236, 279, 316. See also Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism," *Collected Works* 22:193–94; Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, ed. Thomas P. Whitney (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1963), 19, 283.

9. See *History of the Communist Party*, 95; Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 234.

10. See Paul Seabury and Walter A. McDougall, eds., *The Grenada Papers* (San Francisco, 1984), 98, 114–18. The Chinese government has used the same technique of anti-imperialist finger pointing in the aftermath of the

prodemocracy demonstrations of 1989. See Nicholas D. Kristof, "China's Premier Urges Tighter Control," *New York Times*, 21 March 1990, national edition. One of the best evidences that Communist governments purposely create external enemies is that they often accuse capitalist governments of doing the same thing while vehemently denying that they themselves do it—an act of psychological projection typical of both the Communists and the Nazis. See, e.g., Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 307.

11. M. A. Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism: the International Teaching of the Working Class* (Moscow, 1975), 73.

12. For these expressions, see Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 89, 91–92. Almond, it should be noted, gathered some of his specimens of Communist rhetoric from the pages of the *Daily Worker* as well as from more "esoteric" publications such as the Cominform organ *For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy*. See ibid., 62–96.

13. For examples of this phraseology, see CPSU Program, 31 Oct. 1961, in Robert H. McNeal, gen. ed., *Resolutions and Decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Toronto, 1974–82), vol. 4, *The Khrushchev Years, 1953–1964*, ed. Grey Hodnett, 190; unsigned editorial in *Kommunist*, no. 3 (1965), quoted in Richard V. Allen, *Peace or Peaceful Coexistence?* (Chicago, 1966), 56; Andrei Gromyko, *Lenin and the Soviet Peace Policy* (Moscow, 1980), 47, 153.

14. Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 175; Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 92.

15. Lenin, "Comrade Workers, Forward to the Last, Decisive Fight!" *Collected Works* 28:57–58. See also ibid., 56.

16. H. C. Chuang, *The Little Red Book and Current Chinese Language* (Berkeley, Calif., 1968), 23; Chuang, *The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution: A Terminological Study* (Berkeley, Calif., 1967), 22–25.

17. V. Vinogradov, "The U.S. Steps Up the Undeclared War," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 25 Dec. 1983, excerpted in *CDSP*, 25 Jan. 1984, 15.

18. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism," 29, 111; Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 253, 303.

19. Frederick the Great's statement is quoted in Duncan, *Symbols in Society*, 180. Ridicule can, of course, be turned on the reactionaries and renegades as well. At various times the Soviet press, for example, has portrayed Harry Truman as "the sharp-nosed dwarf of the White House," Ronald Reagan's advisers as "global cowboys," and Bob Hope—the well-known American imperialist—as an "aged clown." Mao Tse-tung, on the other hand, was a "would-be theoretician." For his part Mao came up with some memorable ridicule of his own, most notably when he compared imperialists and reactionaries to "paper tigers." This metaphor calculatedly combines vilification with ridicule and contempt, as though Mao were telling his followers: "The enemy is a beast, but if we keep our guard and the beast attacks we will tear it to shreds." The moral: be vigilant, do nothing to undermine or weaken Mao's regime, and everything will be well. For these examples, see Harry Hodgkinson, *The Language of Communism* (New York, 1955), 78;

A. Yakovlev, "Taking the Bit between Its Teeth," *Izvestia*, 7 Oct. 1983, condensed in *CDSP*, 2 Nov. 1983, 18; Yu. Kornilov, "Show Flops," *Sovetskaya Rossia*, 2 Feb. 1982, in *CDSP*, 3 March 1982, 19; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 89; Mao, *Quotations*, 40.

20. The Stalinist is quoted in Bertram D. Wolfe, *An Ideology in Power* (New York, 1970), 247. See also *History of the Communist Party*, 136, 291, 327–28.

21. Lenin, "Speech for the Defence (or for the Prosecution of the Menshevik Section of the Central Committee) Delivered at the Party Tribunal," *Collected Works* 12:430. See also Possony, *Revolution of Madness*, 3; Byfield, *Fifth Weapon*, 47–48, from whom, although he defined it somewhat differently, I have taken the term "albatross."

22. Lumley, *Means of Social Control*, 300–302.

23. Mao, *On New Democracy*, 103.

24. Lenin, quoted in Wolfe, *Ideology in Power*, 359; Lenin, "The Tasks of the Youth League," *Collected Works* 31:290–94. See also Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 129; M. P. Kareva, "Communist Morality," in *Soviet Political Thought: An Anthology*, tr. and ed. Michael Jaworskyj (Baltimore, 1967), 390–91.

25. Lenin, "State and Revolution," *Collected Works* 25:426; Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism," 24.

26. CPSU Program (1986), 85; CPSU Charter, adopted 20 March 1939, in *Materials for Study of Soviet System*, 327. On "fractionalism," see R. N. Carew Hunt, *A Guide to Communist Jargon* (New York, 1957), 137; Waller, *Language of Communism*, 44–46, 51–52; Joseph Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism* (New York, 1934), 120–21.

27. These expressions appear in Konstantin Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, tr. Y. S. Shirkov (Oxford, 1982), 250, 254, 259.

28. See resolution of Twenty-fourth Congress of CPSU, 9 April 1971, in McNeal, *Resolutions and Decisions*, vol. 5, *The Brezhnev Years, 1964–1981*, ed. Donald V. Schwartz, 175.

29. For these examples, see ibid., 189; *Rules of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (Moscow, 1986), 26; Soviet Constitution of 1977, Art. 19, in *The Constitutions of the USSR and the Union Republics: Analysis, Texts, Reports*, ed. F. J. M. Feldbrugge (Alphen aan den Rijn, 1979), 87; Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 249.

30. For these and numerous similar examples, see *History of the Communist Party* and *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

There are two major types of deviationist. A "right-deviationist," sometimes called an "opportunist," "reformist," or "right-revisionist," is an overcautious Communist or socialist who thinks Party policy—rapid industrialization or collectivization, for example—has grown too radical for the times. In the Stalin era, Bukharin and the British Fabians fell into this class. On the other hand, a "'left'-deviationist," also known as a "sectarian" or "'left'-revisionist," is a reckless Communist who would push the pace of revo-

lutionary change faster than circumstances will allow. To this class Soviet officialdom has assigned Leon Trotsky and, during the later years of Mao's reign at any rate, the Chinese rulership. Because in Communist polemics membership in "right" or "'left'" factions depends not upon which side of a parliamentary aisle one sits but upon which side of Party policy one positions oneself, it is possible, as Lin Piao and others have learned to their sorrow, for the same person to be at different times both a right- and a left-deviationist. All depends upon the vicissitudes of policy and the mysterious serpentine motions of History. See Waller, *Language of Communism*, 62–66, 62n.

31. "The Offensive of Fascism and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Fight for the Unity of the Working Class against Fascism," 5, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

32. Mao, *On New Democracy*, 74; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 55.

33. CPSU Program (1961), 259; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 55. See also Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 82–83. Cf. CPSU Program (1986), 49, 81; Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 122.

34. "Offensive of Fascism," 14.

35. Cf. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 436.

36. "Speech to the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," 14 Oct. 1952, in Joseph Stalin, *The Essential Stalin*, ed. Bruce Franklin (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), 510. See also Marx and Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 341, 349–50; Marx, "Capital: Selections," in *Marx-Engels Reader*, 310; Marx, "The German Ideology: Part I," ibid., 161–64.

37. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 69; Stalin, *Problems of Leninism* (New York, 1934), 81. Original Russian references may be found in Stalin, *Sochineniya*, 13 vols. (Moscow: Institut Marksa-Engel'sa-Lenina, 1946–55), 6:133, 8:79.

38. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism," 115. Original Russian reference in Lenin, *Sochineniya*, 45 vols. (Moscow: Institut Marksa-Engel'sa-Lenina, 1941–50), 31:94.

39. Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 7; "Offensive of Fascism," 19; Manuilsky, "Results of Socialist Construction," 8. Cf. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 419.

40. CPSU Program (1961), 246. Cf. CPSU Program (1986), 4, 28, 40–41, 55; *Dictionary of Scientific Communism*, s.v. "Communist Education."

41. See Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, 29–32, 84; Wolfe, *Ideology in Power*, 161.

42. Resolution of CPSU Central Committee, 8 May 1968, in *Brezhnev Years*, 116.

43. Cf. Frederick C. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Image of the United States* (New York, 1950), 118.

44. Resolution of CPSU Central Committee, 30 June 1956, in *Khrushchev Years*, 62; "Against Distortions in Collective Farm Labor Organization," *Pravda*, 19 Feb. 1950, in *Materials for Study of Soviet System*, 568; Cher-

nenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 254. On Soviet statistical forgeries, see Nikolai Shmelev and Vladimir Popov, *The Turning Point*, tr. Michele A. Berdy (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 23–42.

45. A. Zhdanov, "The Duty of a Soviet Writer," in *Materials for Study of Soviet System*, 387.

46. *History of the Communist Party*, 245; André Marty, "For Peace! For the Defence of the Soviet Union!" 20, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

47. Stalin, *War Speeches*, 79, 87, 129.

48. Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 248; Manuilsky, "Results of Socialist Construction," 28; *Kommunist*, no. 9 (1954), quoted in Harold Swayze, *Political Control of Literature in the USSR, 1946–1959* (Cambridge, Mass., 1962), 16.

49. Leonid Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations* (New York, 1979), 123; resolution of CPSU Central Committee, 9 Jan. 1960, in *Khrushchev Years*, 140.

50. For these and other examples, see Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 83; M. Ercoli [Palmiro Togliatti], "The Fight against War and Fascism," 77, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

51. For these typical examples, see Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 39, 75.

52. Letter from Moscow teachers to Stalin, *Pravda*, 25 Nov. 1946, quoted in George S. Counts and Nucia Lodge, *The Country of the Blind* (Boston, 1949), 156; *Soviet Encyclopaedia* (1952), quoted in Hodgkinson, *Language of Communism*, 79; Sergei Kirov, quoted in Mikhail Heller and Aleksandr Nekrich, *Utopia in Power*, tr. Phyllis B. Carlos (New York: Summit Books, 1986), 251.

53. Castro, *Speeches*, 147; Chuang, *Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution*, 31; Tung Hsiao-hai, "Mao Tse-tung's Thought: Source of Boundless Wisdom and Courage," *People's Daily*, 17 Aug. 1966, in *Mao Tse-tung's Thought Is the Invincible Weapon* (Peking, 1968), 18–36.

54. See *Dictionary of Scientific Communism*, s.v. "Violence (Coercion)."

55. For these expressions, see Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 2:82; "Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People," Art. 2, 16 Jan. 1918, in *Materials for Study of Soviet System*, 57; Lenin, "State and Revolution," 426. On the violent nature of proletarian dictatorship, see Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 236; Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 51; Mao, *On New Democracy*, 119; N. Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky, *The ABC of Communism* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1966), 79–81.

56. Lenin, "State and Revolution," 472; Mao, *On New Democracy*, 39.

57. G. Dimitrov, "The Present Rulers of the Capitalist Countries Are But Temporary; The Real Master of the World Is the Proletariat!" 7, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*; *People's Daily*, 4 May 1966, quoted in Chuang, *Little Red Book*, 29; Stalin, *War Speeches*, 20, 64.

58. Lenin, "Speech for the Defence," 426–27.

59. Dimitrov, "Present Rulers of Capitalist Countries," 10.

60. Khrushchev, quoted in Bruce Franklin, Introduction to Stalin, *Essential Stalin*, 29.

61. Lenin, "Telegram to [People's Commissar] J. V. Stalin," 7 July 1918, in *Collected Works* 27:533; Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 280.

62. Prague Radio, 17 Jan. 1951, quoted in Hodgkinson, *Language of Communism*, 95; *History of the Communist Party*, 267.

63. Wang Tao-ming, "To Remould My World Outlook with Mao Tse-tung's Thought," *People's Daily*, 25 Oct. 1966, in *Mao Tse-tung's Thought*, 75.

64. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 108–9. See also ibid., 90–92.

65. Leonid I. Brezhnev, *Our Course: Peace and Socialism* (Moscow, 1980), 78; Manuilsky, "Results of Socialist Construction," 21, 25. See also Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 296; Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, 75.

66. Lenin, "Where to Begin," *Collected Works* 5:24; D. Z. Manuilsky, "The Work of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International," 30, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

67. Ercoli, "Fight against War and Fascism," 70; Manuilsky, "Results of Socialist Construction," 6; Marty, "For Peace!" 20; Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 21.

68. *History of the Communist Party*, 256.

69. Resolution of Twenty-fourth CPSU Congress, 9 April 1971, in *Brezhnev Years*, 184; *Neues Deutschland*, 4 Feb. 1964, quoted in Hans H. Reich, *Sprache und Politik* (Munich, 1968), 113.

70. T. A. Hsia, *Metaphor, Myth, Ritual, and the People's Commune* (Berkeley, Calif., 1961), 1–2, 11–13. For additional examples, see ibid., 4, 6–10, 33–34. On some of the practical motives behind militant Chinese Communist language, see Lowell Dittmer and Chen Ruoxi, *Ethics and Rhetoric of the Chinese Cultural Revolution* (Berkeley, Calif., 1981), 29.

71. Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 127.

72. Zevedei Barbu, "Language in Democratic and Totalitarian Societies: A Psychological Interpretation," *Orbis* 2 (1953): 80.

73. Mao, *Quotations*, 35.

74. For these entirely typical and often-repeated expressions, see Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 164; CPSU Program (1961), 189; Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 294; CPSU Program (1986), 18; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 200.

75. CPSU Program (1961), 182.

76. Lenin, "Imperialism," 300, 302; CPSU Program (1961), 204.

77. G. Arbatov, "Seeking a Crisis," *Pravda*, 1 Jan. 1982, in *CDSP*, 3 Feb. 1982, 2; A. Bovin, "50 Years: What Next?" *Izvestia*, 16 Nov. 1983, in *CDSP*, 14 Dec. 1983, 3.

78. Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 167–68.

79. Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 92; Mao, *On New Democracy*, 57.

80. Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 154.

81. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism," 101; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 25; Mao, *Quotations*, 13.

82. Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 73.

83. For these examples, see Manuilsky, "Results of Socialist Construction," 4; CPSU Program (1961), 173. Concerning the phrase "of a new type,"

Michael Waller has observed that it "justifies the continued use in a socialist [i.e., Communist] context of contaminated or equivocal terms," such as "party," "state," "democracy," and "press." *Language of Communism*, 86n. See also Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 155–56, 166.

84. Castro, *Speeches*, 59; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 228; *History of the Communist Party*, 107.

85. For these examples, see resolution of Twentieth Congress of CPSU, 24 Feb. 1956, in *Khrushchev Years*, 42; Brezhnev, *Peace, Detente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 7; Castro, *Speeches*, 88; Mao, *On New Democracy*, 32.

86. Lenin, "An Unfortunate Peace," *Collected Works* 27:52. On the following day Lenin wrote in the same paper: "The past week has raised the Russian revolution to an immeasurably higher level of historical development. In the course of it history has progressed, has ascended several steps at once." "A Painful But Necessary Lesson," ibid., 27:64. Certainly it was true that the treaty had bought the Bolsheviks time to turn inward on their enemies at home and to gird themselves for future crusades against world imperialism. By ending an unpopular war it saved the Communist regime from collapse, and in that dubious sense history had indeed "ascended." See also Almond, *Appeals of Communism*, 162–63; Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1984), 27n.

87. Waldemar Gurian, "Totalitarianism as Political Religion," in *Totalitarianism*, ed. Carl J. Friedrich (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, Universal Library, 1964), 123. For more on the similarities between religion and ideology, see Feuer, *Ideology and the Ideologists*, esp. 1–2, 167–73.

88. Heb. 11:1 (R.S.V.).

89. *History of the Communist Party*, 170; *Grundlagen des Marxismus-Leninismus* (Berlin, 1959), quoted in Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 165; Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 290.

90. Mao, *On New Democracy*, 32.

91. Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, *ABC of Communism*, dedicatory page, 135, 137, 164.

92. "Deng's June 9 Speech: 'We Faced a Rebellious Clique' and 'Dregs of Society,'" *New York Times*, 30 June 1989, national edition.

93. Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, *ABC of Communism*, dedicatory page.

94. In order of appearance, the expressions quoted are found in the following sources: Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 92; [Nikita S. Khrushchev], *The Anatomy of Terror* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1956), 30; Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 92; Soviet Constitution of 1977, Art. 62, 107, 232.

95. Quoted in Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 266, 272. The "commandments" were written by Walter Ulbricht. Notice in each of the quoted commandments the imperative "Thou shalt," a positive injunction that leaves considerably less room for eccentric and out-of-the-way behavior than does the negative "Thou shalt *not*" of traditional moral and legal codes. Cf. the statement of O'Brien in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 258–59, and see also Orwell, "Politics vs. Literature," 215–16.

96. Joszef Darvas, Hungarian Minister of Education, in speech of 27 April 1951, quoted in Hodgkinson, *Language of Communism*, 111; Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?" *Collected Works* 5:455–56.

97. Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 240, 254.

98. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, 75; Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 88.

99. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 432.

Chapter 8: Rhetorical Treachery

1. Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 155.

2. Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 233; G. M. Malenkov, report to Nineteenth Congress of CPSU, October 1952, quoted in Byfield, *Fifth Weapon*, 45; Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 241.

3. See Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 62–63.

4. Institute for Propaganda Analysis, *Propaganda Analysis* (New York, 1938), 7.

5. Wilhelm Pieck, "Report on the Activities of the Executive Committee of the Communist International," 57, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*; Marcel Cachin, "The Communist Party of France Fights for the People's Front (Speech Delivered at the Seventh World Congress of the C.I.)," 13, ibid.; Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 7.

6. See Alex Zwerdling, *Orwell and the Left* (New Haven, 1974), 11.

7. Juri Tynjanow, "Das Wörterbuch des Polemikers Lenin," in *Sprache und Stil Lenins*, ed. Fritz Mierau (Munich, 1970), 93.

8. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism," 22; Lenin, "Imperialism," 191.

9. CPSU Program (1961), 202; Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 12; Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 215. Cf. Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 127–28, 217.

10. Joe Adamov, on ABC, "Nightline," 27 Oct. 1983.

11. Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 60, 149.

12. Quoted in Waller, *Language of Communism*, 63n.

13. Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 239–40; Stalin, quoted in Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 6; *Tass*, 6 Oct. 1983, in *CDSP*, 2 Nov. 1983, 16.

14. Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 150.

15. See Koestler's contribution in *The God That Failed*, ed. Richard Crossman (New York, 1949), 47–48.

16. Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?" 467.

17. Resolution of CPSU Central Committee, 9 Jan. 1960, in *Khrushchev Years*, 152.

18. See Hodgkinson, *Language of Communism*, 132.

19. See Hugo Moser, *Sprachliche Folgen der politischen Teilung Deutschlands* (Düsseldorf, 1962), 40. "Pejorative prefix" is Moser's term. See also Manfred Pechau, "Nationalsozialismus und deutsche Sprache" (Ph.D. diss., Univ. of Greifswald, 1935), 22.

20. Resolution of CPSU Central Committee, 29 June 1957, in *Khrushchev Years*, 93. See also Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 279, 436, 447. "Anti-" also has positive applications. In expressions like "antifascism," "antifeudalism," "antiwar," "antimilitarism," and "anti-imperialism," it sheds its pejorative sense and connotes a noble opposition to a negative and evil entity or force.

21. Kovalev, "Sovereignty and the Internationalist Obligations of Socialist Countries," 52.

22. Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 1:86, 2:299.

23. Friedrich Engels, "On Social Relations in Russia," in *Marx-Engels Reader*, 592.

24. Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 1:55. See also ibid., 56–57; Roy A. Medvedev, *On Stalin and Stalinism*, tr. Ellen de Kadt (Oxford, 1979), 72. Eugene Lyons, who covered the Soviet Union as a reporter for United Press International in the 1930s, gives a similar history of the word *kulak* in *Assignment in Utopia*, 275–76. Orwell wrote an approving review of this book for the *New English Weekly*, and he may have been thinking of *kulak* and comparable Soviet terms when he coined the elastic Newspeak expressions *oldthink*, *crimethink*, and *sexcrime*. See *CEJL* 1:332–34.

25. Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 3:352.

26. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 214. Before Stalin's death Khrushchev himself was in the habit of using the phrase in obsequious imitation. See, e.g., ibid., 13.

27. Quoted in Wolfe, *Ideology in Power*, 393n.

28. "The Victory of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. and Its World Historic Significance," 29, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

29. Manuilsky, "Work of Seventh Congress," 8.

30. *History of the Communist Party*, 292; Medvedev, *On Stalin and Stalinism*, 74. On what "dekulakization" meant in human suffering, see Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 3:350–68.

31. Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 204.

32. Decree of Federal Presidium of USSR abolishing death penalty, 26 May 1947, in *Materials for Study of Soviet System*, 403. On euphemisms connected with the forced-labor camps and prisons, see Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago*, esp. 1:284–85, 328, 459–60.

33. See, e.g., Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 111, where he referred to the period 1929–41 as one of a "cultural revolution" in Russian life. Recall too the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in Mao's China.

34. Quoted in "Stalinism Subsumed within Sovietism," *Soviet World Outlook*, 15 Jan. 1980, 7. See also Lewis S. Feuer, "Meeting the Philosophers," *Survey*, no. 51 (1964), 19–20.

35. See, e.g., Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 241. Cf. Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 77.

36. Yevg. Bai, "The Courage and Pain of Grenada," *Izvestia*, 2 Nov. 1983, excerpted in *CDSP*, 30 Nov. 1983, 17; Castro, *Speeches*, 280; Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 29.

37. CPSU Program (1961), 181.

38. See, e.g., Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 151; Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 14. Cf. Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 80.

39. Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 1:88, 88n.

40. See U.S. Department of State, *Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939–1941*, Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office (Washington, D.C., 1948), 98–100.

41. Quoted in Lasswell and Leites, *Language of Politics*, 315.

42. Lenin, "Imperialism," 187. See also Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?" 361.

43. See *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, 3d ed. (English), s.v. "Aesopian Language."

44. Possony, Preface to Colby, *Communese-English Dictionary*, xv-xvi. See also ibid., xi-xxii; Stefan T. Possony, *Wordsmanship: Semantics as a Communist Weapon* (Washington, D.C., 1961), 1–2; Louis Francis Budenz, *Men without Faces* (New York, 1950), 6, 8–9, 45, 72–73, 79–80, 82–84, 100.

45. Brezhnev's phraseology may be found in Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 22, 66, 72, 221.

46. For Chernenko's phraseology, see Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, viii, 54, 75.

47. See Richard Pipes, *Survival Is Not Enough* (New York, 1984), 78–83. Cf. John W. Finney, "Brezhnev Said to Assure East Europe That Accords with West Are a Tactic," *New York Times*, 17 Sept. 1973, late city edition.

48. Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 158. See also ibid., 157.

Chapter 9: The Rectification of Language

1. For an eyewitness account of the Central Committee meeting, see Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, tr. Max Eastman, 3 vols. (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1957), 3:322. For a secondary account based on Vladimir Pavlovich Miliutin's notes of the meeting, see Bernard Comrie and Gerald Stone, *The Russian Language since the Revolution* (Oxford, 1978), 147–48.

2. A. A. Sokolsky, *A History of the Russian Language* (Madrid, 1966), 140–42.

3. Quoted in Mueller, *Politics of Communication*, 37.

4. Quoted in P. H. Vigor, *The Soviet View of War, Peace, and Neutrality* (London, 1975), 160. Cf. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Peace."

5. For Soviet officialdom's views on peaceful coexistence, see, e.g., Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 61; Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 206, 335; Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 60–61; statements by N. Shishlin and S. Kovalev, quoted in Allen, *Peace or Peaceful Coexistence?* 85, 89–90. See also *Statement of the 81 Communist and Workers Parties Meeting in Moscow, USSR* (Dec. 1960), quoted in ibid., 81; *Dictionary of Scientific Communism*, s.vv. "Detente" and "Peaceful Coexistence of States with Different Social Systems."

6. Soviet Constitution of 1977, 89.

7. Lenin, "Revolutionary Phrase," 19–29; Lenin, "Speeches against Trotsky's Amendments to the Resolution on War and Peace," *Collected Works* 27:120–21; Lenin, "The Chief Task of Our Day," ibid., 27:162. See also Lenin, "A Painful but Necessary Lesson," 64–65; Lenin, "Report on Ratification of the Peace Treaty," ibid., 27:190.

8. CPSU Program (1961), 207. Significantly, in its definition of peaceful coexistence the Program of 1986 dropped the reference to class struggle—presumably at the prompting of Gorbachev, whose minister of foreign affairs, Shevardnadze, stated that "the struggle between two opposing systems is no longer a determining tendency of the present era." But even though Shevardnadze insisted that coexistence and class struggle are not identical or inseparably related, the term "peaceful coexistence" remains tainted and suspect to many in the West—so much so that at the Moscow summit in 1988 President Reagan's advisers dissuaded him from signing a joint statement committing the superpowers to a policy of peaceful coexistence. See CPSU Program (1986), 23; Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 147; Peter Zwick, "New Thinking and New Foreign Policy under Gorbachev," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 22 (June 1989): 216; Philip Taubman, "Gorbachev Criticizes Reagan, Seeing 'Missed Opportunities,' but Calls Visit a 'Major Event,'" *New York Times*, 2 June 1988, national edition.

9. Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 335.

10. *Political Terms* (Moscow, 1982), s.v. "Imperialism."

11. Quoted in Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 1.

12. See, e.g., *Political Terms*, s.vv. "Cold War" and "Militarism"; *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Militarism"; Vigor, *Soviet View of War*, 162. Cf. Chernenko, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, 210; Brezhnev, *Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations*, 122–23. It should be noted that in the late 1970s the Soviets and the Cubans condemned Chinese "aggression" in Vietnam, so that this term has come to apply in practice to maverick Communist states as much as to imperialist predators. See Brezhnev, *Our Course*, 24; Castro, *Speeches*, 139.

13. Quoted in Hodgkinson, *Language of Communism*, 59. Cf. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Internationalism."

14. Castro, *Speeches*, 123, 335.

15. Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 71, 125.

16. Ibid., 125; Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 323–24.

17. Center for Chinese Studies, *Current Chinese Communist Newspaper Terms and Sayings* (Berkeley, Calif., 1971), 6.

18. Winfred P. Lehmann, ed., *Language and Linguistics in the People's Republic of China* (Austin, Tex., 1975), 91–92. Cf. Weinreich, "Russification of Soviet Minority Languages," 54.

19. Dittmer and Ruoxi, *Ethics and Rhetoric of Cultural Revolution*, 47.

20. Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 36; T. R. Fyvel, "The Real Ilya Ehrenburg," *Tribune* (London), 11 Aug. 1950.

21. Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 36; *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Cosmopolitanism."

22. Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 37–38; Roy A. Medvedev, *Let History Judge*, ed. David Joravsky and Georges Haupt, tr. Colleen Taylor (New York, 1971), 493–94; Medvedev, *On Stalin and Stalinism*, 146.

23. Lasswell and Leites, *Language of Politics*, 308–9.

24. Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 117–18.

25. Quoted in Lasswell and Leites, *Language of Politics*, 320–21.

26. Soviet Constitution of 1977, 77.

27. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "People."

28. Mao, *On New Democracy*, 116. See also Chuang, *Little Red Book*, 22, 50n-51n; Robert Jay Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* (New York, 1961), 433.

29. Castro, *Speeches*, 284–85.

30. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "People."

31. James D. Carney and Richard K. Scheer, *Fundamentals of Logic* (New York, 1964), 102–3.

32. Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 7, 74.

33. *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Heroism."

34. Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 269.

35. *Political Terms*, s.vv. "Cold War" and "NATO."

36. Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 81.

37. D. Z. Manuilsky, "Engels in the Struggle for Revolutionary Marxism," 4, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*; Castro, *Speeches*, 296.

38. Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 179.

39. See *Political Terms*, s.v. "Propaganda"; Gromyko, *Lenin and Soviet Peace Policy*, 205. Cf. Münzenberg, *Propaganda als Waffe*, 10–13.

40. Castro, *Speeches*, 258. On "democracy," see also *Political Terms*, s.v. "Democracy"; *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Democracy"; Lenin, "State and Revolution," 420, 460–62, 471–72, 481; Lenin, "Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky," 235–301 passim; Suslov, *Marxism-Leninism*, 15–16; Waller, *Language of Communism*, 106–9.

41. Cf. Lionel Ruby, *The Art of Making Sense*, 2d ed. (Philadelphia, 1968), 42–43.

42. See Possony, *Revolution of Madness*, 4–6; G. Dimitrov, "The Working Class against Fascism," 79, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*; Dimitrov, "The Working Class against Fascism: Speech in Reply to the Discussion," 4, 19–21, ibid.; Dimitrov, "Present Rulers of Capitalist Countries," 7; Ercoli, "Fight against War and Fascism," 57; Pieck, "Report on Activities of Executive Committee," 85; O. Kuusinen, "The Movement of the Youth and the Struggle against Fascism and the Danger of War," 12–13, in *Report of Seventh World Congress*.

43. Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 129–30.

44. V. N. Vološinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, tr. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York, 1973), 23–24.

45. Harold D. Lasswell, "Language of Politics," in *Language: An Enquiry into Its Meaning and Function*, ed. Ruth Nanda Anshen (New York, 1957; rpt. Port Washington, N.Y., 1971), 282–83.

46. Sigmund Freud, "The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, gen. ed. and tr. James Strachey (London, 1957), vol. 11, *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, Leonardo da Vinci, and Other Works*, 153–61.

47. Quoted in Adler, *Marxist Linguistic Theory*, 87. Cf. Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 283; Moser, *Sprachliche Folgen*, 32; Wolfgang Leonhard, *Child of the Revolution*, tr. C. M. Woodhouse (Chicago, 1958), 482.

48. *Political Terms*, s.v. "Trotskyism." Cf. *Dictionary of Scientific Communism*, s.v. "Trotskyism."

49. Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 144. On value judgments in Marxist-Leninist language, see Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero*, tr. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York, 1968), 22–24.

50. *Political Terms*, s.v. "War."

51. See ibid., s.vv. "Aggression" and "Exploitation." See also ibid., s.vv. "Bourgeoisie," "Capitalism," "Militarism," and "Socialism"; *Dictionary of Scientific Communism*, s.vv. "Capitalism" and "Exploitation."

52. Quoted in Ruby, *Art of Making Sense*, 87.

53. *Political Terms*, s.vv. "Crisis," "Socialism," and "Unemployment." See also Lasswell and Leites, *Language of Politics*, 310–11; Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 294.

54. On changing Chinese terminology, see James H.-Y. Tai, "Vocabulary Changes in the Chinese Language: Some Observations on Extent and Nature," *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 3 (May/Sept. 1975): 233–44; Lehmann, *Language and Linguistics in People's Republic*, 28.

55. See Comrie and Stone, *Russian Language since the Revolution*, 141–42, 148–49, 154–55.

56. On "fascist" and "imperialism," see Joseph Berger, *Nothing but the Truth* (New York, 1971), 177; Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 332.

57. Reich, *Sprache und Politik*, 314–15, 317–18.

58. Kuo Mo-jou, quoted in James D. White, "Language Reform—à la Red," *Milwaukee Journal*, 29 Jan. 1956, pt. 5. See also Lehmann, *Language and Linguistics in People's Republic*, 43, 46; Alan P. L. Liu, *Communications and National Integration in Communist China* (Berkeley, Calif., 1971), 17–18, 21.

59. Ellul, *Propaganda*, 110; Paul L.-M. Serruys, *Survey of the Chinese Language Reform and the Anti-Illiteracy Movement in Communist China* (Berkeley, Calif., 1962), 75; Paul Kratochvíl, *The Chinese Language Today* (London, 1968), 136–40. Cf. Fritz Van Briessen, "Changing North China," *Asian Horizon* 2 (Autumn-Winter 1949–50): 3.

60. Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 143.

61. Few if any exhaustive studies have been done. But see Comrie and Stone, *Russian Language since the Revolution*, 142; Mueller, *Politics of Communication*, 36–37; Moser, *Sprachliche Folgen*, 9.

62. Cf. Gregory Klimov, *The Terror Machine*, tr. H. C. Stevens (London, 1953), 141.

63. Wilhelm Schmidt, quoted in Adler, *Marxist Linguistic Theory*, 87.

64. Dieter Faulseit, quoted in ibid., 89; Mao Tse-tung, quoted in Waller, *Language of Communism*, 60.

65. K. Petrov, "Organizers of the Counterrevolutionary Putsch in Hungary Miscalculated," *Izvestia*, 28 Oct. 1956, in *CDSP*, 21 Nov. 1956, 11.

66. Lenin to Inessa Armand, c. 31 Dec. 1913, in *Collected Works* 35:131.

67. See George Paloczi-Horvath, *The Writer and the Commissar* (London, 1960), 10; Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Speaks*, 257; Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, 43.

68. Cf. Paloczi-Horvath, *Writer and the Commissar*, 10–11; Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, 106; Koestler, in *God That Failed*, 60; Richard Bernstein, "As the Crackdown Continues, China Starts to Seem Just like Old Times," *New York Times*, 20 June 1989, national edition. For Nikolai Bukharin's warning that parties of revolution often degenerate into parties of public order, see David K. Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams* (New York, 1983), 265. For the altogether ironic and futile concern of Soviet officialdom that too much of its political agitation is afflicted with "formalism, a propensity for wordy chatter, all kinds of propaganda cliches, materials presented in a dull, 'bureaucratic' style, a reiterative, mechanical repetition of general truths instead of their creative comprehension," see resolution of CPSU Central Committee, 26 April 1979, in *Brezhnev Years*, 279.

69. For one sad case, see Koestler, in *God That Failed*, 45–46. For an explanation of the term "herostratic," see ibid., 45.

70. Quoted in Paloczi-Horvath, *Writer and the Commissar*, 52. On the importance of slogans, repetition, and ritual language, see Lasswell and Leites, *Language of Politics*, 35–36; Harold D. Lasswell and Dorothy Blumenstock, *World Revolutionary Propaganda* (New York, 1939), 107–8; Barbu, "Language in Democratic and Totalitarian Societies," 81; Jean-Marie Domenach, "Leninist Propaganda," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 15 (Summer 1951): 267–68. For a Communist perspective on repetition, see Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, 51–52, 271.

71. Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, 19.

72. See J. V. Stalin, *Marxism and Linguistics* (Montreal, n.d.), esp. 5–10, 18–25.

73. Alan M. G. Little, "Pavlov and Propaganda," *Problems of Communism* 2, no. 2 (1953): 14–21.

74. Quoted in Mueller, *Politics of Communication*, 35. See also Lehmann, *Language and Linguistics in People's Republic*, 128; Serruys, *Survey of Chinese Language Reform*, 17.

75. *Pravda*, 7 Nov. 1957, quoted in Wolfe, *Ideology in Power*, 40.

76. Le Bon, *The Crowd*, 134–35. Concerning the monopoly on words, see Michel Heller, "Langue Russe et Langue Soviétique," *Le Monde* (Paris), 5 July 1979.

Chapter 10: Newspeak and Its Antecedents: A Comparison

1. See Alex Inkeles and Raymond A. Bauer, *The Soviet Citizen* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), 178–79, 186; Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, 115; Hansjürgen Schierbaum, "Das Wort als politisches Instrument," in *Das Aueler Protokoll*, ed. Hugo Moser (Düsseldorf, 1964), 38–39; Mueller, *Politics of Communication*, 41–42; Liu, *Communications and National Integration*, 20–21; Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China* (Berkeley, Calif., 1966), 48–49. Cf. Grothe, *To Win the Minds of Men*, 46.

2. Quoted in Lifton, *Thought Reform*, 270.

3. Nadezhda Mandelstam, *Hope against Hope*, tr. Max Hayward (New York, 1970), 51.

4. *Coriolanus* 5.3.84–86.

5. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 705.

6. Rauschning, *Voice of Destruction*, 211. On Orwell's unhistorical portrait of an apolitical proletariat, see Irving Howe, *Politics and the Novel* (Cleveland, 1957), 247; Howe, "1984: Enigmas of Power," in *1984 Revisited*, 14–16.

7. Mao, *Quotations*, 179. On the distinction between agitation and propaganda, see Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?" 409–10; Hunt, *Guide to Communist Jargon*, 3–4.

8. Cf. Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 96.

9. "Propaganda and Demotic Speech," 135–41. See also George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (New York, 1958), 207–8, 255; Young, "Totalitarian Language," 92–109.

10. See Friedrich and Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, esp. chap. 16.

11. Cf. Inkeles and Bauer, *Soviet Citizen*, 178, 184; Ian Kershaw, "How Effective Was Nazi Propaganda?" in *Nazi Propaganda*, ed. David Welch (London, 1983), 192–93; Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 209. On the skepticism produced by the conflict between untruthful propaganda and indoctrination and the individual's perception of reality, see Vladimir Reisky de Dubnic, *Communist Propaganda Methods* (New York, 1960), 243–44. On propaganda and "local facts," see Ellul, *Propaganda*, 54.

12. See Wulf, *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder*, 21–22; Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 144.

13. *Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, 461. See also ibid., 460; Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 275–76.

14. Quoted in Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda*, 422–23. See also Riess, *Joseph Goebbels*, 192. Cf. George Orwell, "Speaking to Europe," *Tribune* (London), 30 April 1943; Ellul, *Propaganda*, 15, 20, 22, 52–54.

15. Joseph Goebbels, *Final Entries, 1945: The Diaries of Joseph Goebbels*, ed. Hugh Trevor-Roper, tr. Richard Barry (New York, 1978), 213–14; *Goeb-*

bels Diaries, 1942–43, 460. See also Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 151, 190; Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 54; Kershaw, "How Effective Was Nazi Propaganda?" 201.

16. Herzstein, *War That Hitler Won*, 392; *Goebbels Diaries, 1942–43*, 514.

17. On "fanatical" and its derivatives, see Berning, *Vokabular des Nationalsozialismus*, 74–78; Klemperer, *LTI*, 62–67.

18. "Politics and the English Language," 137.

19. Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 144, 147.

20. Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 73.

21. Gorbachov, *Speeches and Writings*, 343. See also ibid., 93; Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 21–22. "The unity of words and deeds" is itself a cliché, widely used by Party figures in the Brezhnev era—precisely when, according to Gorbachev, the gulf between words and deeds was greatest.

22. Theodor Plievier, quoted in Jürgen Rühle, *Literature and Revolution*, tr. and ed. Jean Steinberg (New York, 1969), 277.

23. On the varieties and characteristics of counterlanguage, see, e.g., Joost A. M. Meerloo, *Conversation and Communication* (New York, 1952), 19; Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams*, 39, 141; Moser, *Sprachliche Folgen*, 46–47; Kershaw, "How Effective Was Nazi Propaganda?" 194–96; Bergsdorf, "Sprache der Diktatur," 123; Grunberger, *Social History of the Third Reich*, 331–40; Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, 52–53, 198; Steinert, *Hitler's War and the Germans*, 195, 203, 217, 234, 281; Traugott, "Newspeak: Could It Really Work?" 101–2. Cf. Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow*, 148; Louis Fischer, "Blind Words in Russia," *Saturday Review*, 5 Jan. 1952, 30; Heller, "Langue Russe et Langue Soviétique."

24. Some of the numerous antiregime jokes circulating in the USSR during the early 1980s made a serious point about the frequent discrepancies between reality and Party rhetoric. One of these was the joke about a Russian who goes to a medical clinic and asks to see an eye and ear doctor. Advised that the clinic has only an eye doctor and an ear, nose, and throat doctor, he replies: "I need an eye and ear doctor. I keep hearing one thing and seeing another." Shipler, *Russia: Broken Idols, Solemn Dreams*, 116.

25. Blumenthal, "On the Nazi Vocabulary," 64.

26. See Meyer Galler, comp., *Soviet Prison Camp Speech: A Survivor's Glossary: Supplement* (Hayward, Calif., 1977); Meyer Galler and Harlan E. Marquess, comps., *Soviet Prison Camp Speech: A Survivor's Glossary* (Madison, Wis., 1972).

27. Anatoly Marchenko, *My Testimony*, tr. Michael Scammell (New York, 1969), 91–94, 142–43.

28. Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg I," 65–68; Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg II," 100, 103.

29. See W. W. Schütz, *Pens under the Swastika* (London, 1946; rpt. Port Washington, N.Y., 1971), 22.

30. See Solzhenitsyn, *Gulag Archipelago* 3:92, 114, 533n.

31. *Hitler's Secret Conversations*, 397–98. Cf. Adolf Hitler, *The Testament of Adolf Hitler*, ed. François Genoud, tr. R. H. Stevens (London, 1961), 94–95.

32. Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 81.

33. For examples, see Klaus, *Sprache der Politik*, esp. 22, 31, 56, 73, 109, 111, 137, 143, 147–48, 152–53, 236, 247, 255. Cf. Münzenberg, *Propaganda als Waffe*, which focuses on the Nazis' misuse of language.

34. David Widgery, "Reclaiming Orwell," in *Nineteen Eighty-Four in 1984*, ed. Paul Chilton and Aubrey Crispin (London, 1983), 16. Cf. Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston, 1966), esp. chap. 4.

35. Openness and diversity in language create their own problems. As Tocqueville discovered long ago, democratic language, endlessly changing, is a Babel of words with multiple and often contradictory meanings that tend not so much to constrict thought as to confuse it. The problem here is not the control of language but the lack of control. See the second volume of *Democracy in America*, chap. 16.

36. Fredric Warburg, *All Authors Are Equal* (New York, 1974), 109–10.

Appendix A: Newspeak, Cablese, and Bureaucratic Code Language

1. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 307–8, 312.

2. Joseph Foley and James Ayer, "Orwell in English and Newspeak: A Computer Translation," *College Composition and Communication* 17 (Feb. 1966): 17.

3. Ibid., 17–18.

4. Ibid., 18.

5. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 39.

6. Ibid., 45.

7. Ibid.

8. Richard Rees, *George Orwell: Fugitive from the Camp of Victory* (Carbondale, Ill., 1961), 118.

9. Ibid., 117–18.

10. Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia*, 338.

11. Wulf, *Aus dem Lexikon der Mörder*, 61.

Appendix B: Nazi Abbreviations and Stump Compounds

1. Many of these expressions appear in Paechter, *Nazi-Deutsch*.

2. Hitler, *Speeches* 1:178.

3. Directive of 3 July 1941, quoted in Rolf Glunk, "Erfolg und Mißerfolg V," 180.

4. Barbu, "Language in Democratic and Totalitarian Societies," 77.

5. See ibid., 78.

Appendix D: Communist Bipolar Word Pairs

1. Cherry, *On Human Communication*, 93.

2. The Soviet Union "assisted" the Afghan people in repelling aggression; the United States "interfered" in the internal affairs of the Grenadian people.

3. The Communist who advocates building and consolidating socialism in one country when conditions are unfavorable for spreading the revolution to others is taking a "concrete" approach to policy; the "sectarian" who wants revolution at any price and regardless of whether conditions favor it is taking an unhistorical, "unconcrete"—that is, abstract—approach.

4. As in "real freedom" vs. "formal freedom," "genuine humanism" vs. "false humanism," "proletarian democracy" vs. "bourgeois democracy," etc.

Appendix E: Isms of Communist Discourse

1. During the Cold War this term was a code word for United States.

2. Since 1949 this term has often been a code word for NATO.

3. "Social imperialism" refers to the attitudes and actions of (a) socialists who, like the German Social Democrats in 1914, succumb to the chauvinist spirit and support an imperialist war, or (b) (as used by the Chinese Communists during the 1960s and 1970s) the Soviet Union.

4. "Tailism" is Lenin's term for the tendency of some socialists to follow the spontaneous working-class movement, which usually seeks only limited and gradual improvement in the lot of the workers, rather than to get out in front and lead the proletariat to the violent overthrow of capitalism. Other names for tailism include opportunism, economism, or spontaneity. See Lenin, "What Is to Be Done?" 396.

5. This is a Grenadian Communist coinage. See Seabury and McDougall, *Grenada Papers*, 286.

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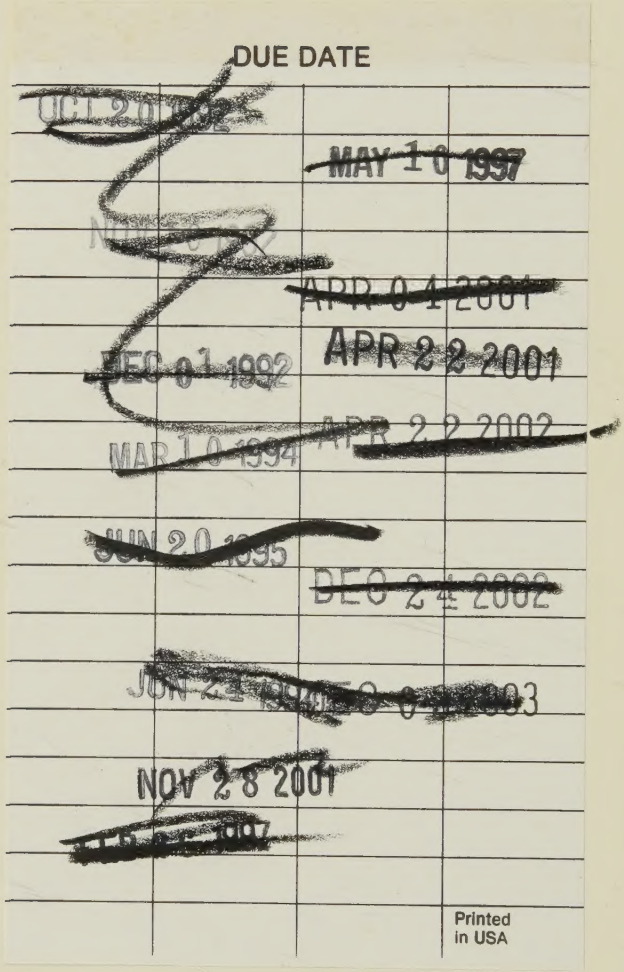
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